This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

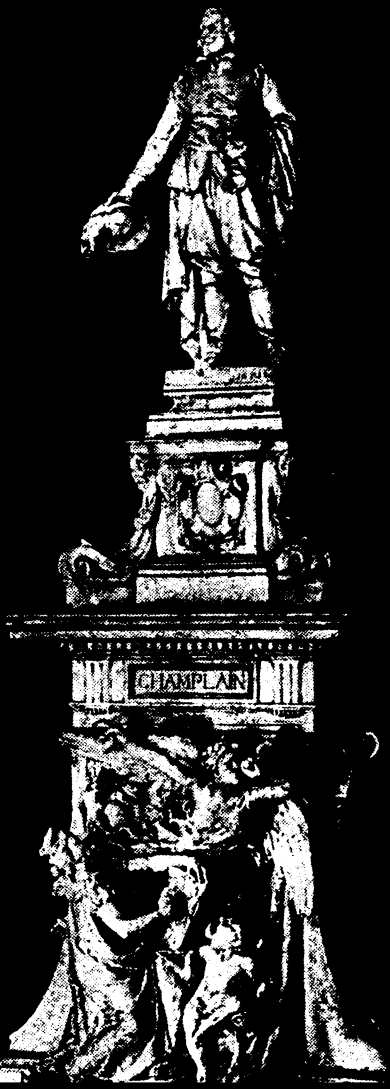
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



Champlain

J. M. Harper

Digitized by Google

Can 9721.1.33

HARVARD COLLEGE
LIBRARY

THE GIFT OF

CLARANCE MacDONALD WARNER

OF BOSTON

Digitized by Google

Yours Sincerely

J. N. Hoskyns

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN'S MONUMENT

Digitized by Google

MPLAIN

A IN THREE ACTS

With an Introduction entitled

Twenty Years And After

BY

HARPER

London
NY NEW YORK
Toronto

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN'S MONUMENT

Digitized by Google

ANGLO-AMERICAN EDITION

CHAMPLAIN

A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS

With an Introduction entitled

Twenty Years And After

BY

J. M. HARPER

Author of the "Montgomery Siege," "The Prince's Booklet," "Sacrament Sunday," "Our Jaemes" "The Little Sergeant," "Songs of the Commonwealth," etc., etc.

THIRD EDITION

Frederick Warne & Co., London
JOHN LANE COMPANY, NEW YORK
William Briggs, Toronto

Digitized by Google

Can 9721.1.33

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
GIFT OF
CLARANCE MACDONALD WARNER
4 June 1923.

Copyright, Canada, 1908, by
JOHN M. HARPER.

Printed and bound by
WILLIAM BRIGGS
Toronto

Digitized by Google

TO

DR. JAMES DOUGLAS

AUTHOR OF

"QUEBEC IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY"

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS

	Page
Twenty Years and After	9
Champlain: A Drama in Three Acts	55
Explanatory Notes	233
Samuel de Champlain, the Explorer	267

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Twenty Years and After

An Historical Sketch

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Twenty Years and After

THE first siege of Quebec, before and after, marks, as a world's record, the point of convergence of two distinct national or international lines of colonizing enterprise. In order, therefore, to understand the period in its fullest importance—outside of its local acceptance as a chapter of early American history—we have to trace these lines, each by itself, the one from the founding of the New England colonies by the British and the Dutch, and the other from the earliest exploitation of Acadia and New France by the French and the British.

There had been war between France and Britain, persevered in through the rivalries between Cardinal Richelieu, the Minister of Louis XIII., and the Duke of Buckingham, the Minister of Charles I., culminating, as it did, in the siege of Rochelle, in 1628. The first siege of Quebec took place in 1629. And, though peace had been declared between the two contending nations at the time when David Kirke, sailing under letters of marque from the king of England, arrived in the St. Lawrence to bid Champlain surrender his charge near Cape Diamond, neither Champlain nor Kirke had definite information of the declaration when the latter appeared before Quebec. Consequently, the taking of that place was, *de jure,* no other than an act of piracy, though the urbanity of the invader towards the besieged, and the easy terms

Digitized by Google

of capitulation, indicate that the former was no pirate at heart, even at a time when there was little difference between privateering and piracy in their methods of attack and rapacity.

The mixing up of joint-stock mercantile adventure with projects of colonization was the first of Canada's perplexities of rule. The trader, naturally looking for immediate returns and abnormal percentages, is instant enough in making advances to his adventurous agents, while promising trade centres are being located. This, however, continues only for a year or two. In the matter of colonization, the cupidity of investors and the cheese-paring of competition too often encourage a neglect of the means that make for the development of a country as a place of permanent abode. Even with the dividends at their highest, the trading adventurer is nearly always too eager to secure for himself alone the skimmings of the milk-pot.

Nor is the pathway of Canadian progress ever likely to be rid of this cupidity that would drain a country of its resources, for the sake of wealth to be invested or spent elsewhere than in Canada. Modern times bear witness to this caterpillar instinct of many of our capitalists, possibly preventing us from marvelling at the slow progress of New France at the time David Kirke demanded the surrender of its little hungry-eyed capital, while monopolist was striving with sub-trader and wage-earner for the best of the bargain. There were crumbs, it is true, that fell from the table of the monopolist, grudged as they were, for the benefit of colonization. In the words of Father Sagard, the big fish did not devour all the little fish. And it must not be forgotten that but for the monopolists, De Chaste

Digitized by Google

and De Monts, not to speak of the Company of Merchants, Champlain might never have been at the founding of Port Royal in Acadia, nor have been able to make the impress that he made upon the destinies of Canada.

The story of that true colonizer's recurring voyages from Quebec to France is the history of the trading unrest of the monopoly-companies, which continued, during his time, to think more of their dividends than the building up of the country. The tribute they had agreed to pay to meet the fiscal necessities of the colony had not unfrequently to be wrung from them or their reluctant shareholders; and Champlain had, therefore, to be in France almost as often as in Canada, to quicken indifference, and even at times to save his colonizing enterprise from utter collapse.

When De Chaste died, De Monts had influence enough at the court of Henry IV. to secure his appointment as Lieutenant-General. His scheme of colonization in Acadia, which has a record of its own, had not met the success expected of it. Trading jealousies and religious antipathies seem to have been in league against its advancement from the beginning; and, but for the personal favour of the king, the De Monts' charter would perhaps not have been renewed, nor the colony at Quebec established so soon. After the assassination of the king, moreover, De Monts and his monopoly met with discredit. Merchants are seldom slow to seek their advantage in a rival's disadvantage. The fur trade, for a time, was all but ruined, from the rapacious inroads of numerous competitors in the race for wealth. And, when De Monts gave up the title of Lieutenant-General, which had become all but an empty one, his ever active deputy had to hasten over to France, to take counsel with

Digitized by Google

Count de Soissons, Prince de Condé, and any other friends he could make, to secure a person of rank who was willing to assume the vacant office of Lieutenant-General.

As an outcome, Count de Soissons himself was prevailed upon to accept the position; but that nobleman's death, a few weeks after, left Champlain's work of reorganization all to be done over again. Then the Prince de Condé was induced to assume the office under the more pretentious title of Viceroy of New France, with Champlain for a deputy, as governor in Canada. The latter, under the new arrangement, had his position, as a servant of the Crown, more clearly defined, perhaps, but his task was still the same, of building up Tadousac, Quebec, and other trading posts with whatever share of the gains of the traders he could peaceably secure. It is never easy to collect tribute without the means of coercion. It is doubly difficult to impress the duty of paying tribute on those who have repeatedly defied the law. Quebec's prestige, as a new place far from direct legal influences, was helpless to enforce the raising of a colonial revenue. For lack of funds the little capital made but little advance during its infancy; and hence Champlain, in 1610, made the first of his many canvasses in France for the means of realizing better results in the colonization of Canada.

The fruits of that canvass was the organization of a new trading company, under royal charter, as De Monts' had been. This new body was called the Company of Merchants. It comprised many of the richer traders of Dieppe, St. Malo, and Rouen, these agreeing to provide means for the immediate colonization of the country, if the queen-regent would discriminate in their favour as

Digitized by Google

monopolists of the fur trade. In the name of the new company, the anxious Champlain promised to take out a relay of new settlers, when he next went back to Canada. Besides, the spiritual welfare of the new colony, he was to see, would be fostered at the hands of a contingent of the Recollet Fathers, from whom the natives as well as the settlers would have religious and educational oversight. The mixing up of colonization and mercantile adventure was to have more of a trial than it had had under the privileges granted to De Monts. The sharing of the profits of the restored monopoly would relieve the Crown of any serious outlay, beyond the salary of the Viceroy and the expense connected with some little show of military defence. The colonizing of territory that already belonged to France involved no new political responsibility. The colonial prestige of France would be enhanced, without international strife and its expense. The charter asked for was a fair deal with monopolists who were willing to pay tribute of their own choice. The proposal was a good thing for France, and an excellent thing for the new country. What more, therefore, could be said in its favour than that? And so, with many other political anxieties in the regency, the Crown gave way. Mary de Medicis sanctioned the new charter, the Company of Merchants thereby securing an eleven years' monopoly of the fur trade, under the Viceroyalty of the Prince of Condé.

This legalizing of a trade monopoly provided no more of a bed of roses for colonization than it did under De Monts' charter. As things turned out, the carrying out of the mixed designs of Champlain and the Company of Merchants was primarily interrupted by the

Digitized by Google

cloud which fell upon the Viceroy's personal affairs. After the Prince of Condé's marriage with a Montmorenci, he had had many unhappy experiences at the French court, having eventually been obliged to flee with his wife into exile, to shield her from the persistent gallantries of the king. Naturally enough, his influence had waned during his absence, with the heaviest of odds against him, before he returned, on the death of Henry, to play a premature part in the political arena of an unstable regency. Instantly he was accused by his numerous detractors of intriguing against the regency, as many others were without reason; and the scandal ended in his being thrown into prison, where he remained during the greater part of his tenure of the position of Viceroy in Canada. During that time he was able to give little effective attention to the affairs of New France. Indeed, but for the fame of Champlain's explorations and the dividends of the Company of Merchants, New France was during his incumbency all but lost sight of. The office that was ostensibly his was looked upon as a sinecure, over which there was likely to be no end of disputes about the payment of the salary attached, whenever the Prince was released. Except as a place abounding in forests and intermittently yielding rich harvests of furs, Canada was seldom discussed in Paris or elsewhere. As far as the interests of the Crown were involved, the protection of Quebec, or the encouragement of its struggling pioneers, was less than the least of the trifles daily lost sight of in the chatter of Parisian social circles. There was not even sufficient interest over its affairs to foster the spirit of intrigue for place, should it come to anything as a country. For while the busybodies of the court did their best to bring

Digitized by Google

about a separation by divorce between Condé and his wife, no one seems to have thought it worth his while to intrigue against his holding of the office of Viceroy.

Nevertheless the Prince of Condé, even while in prison, had not entirely forgotten New France, mercenarily or otherwise. A man in his reduced circumstances was not likely to shut his eyes to the possibilities of wealth-productiveness in this new land. Champlain's reports concerning nature's prodigalities in it, and the enriching cargoes of peltries that were their ready corroboration, naturally raised in him the hope that he might do something for himself and for it, too, by turning the attention of others to its vast resources. And as soon as he was set at liberty he entered into negotiations with a member of his wife's family, who afterwards became the Duc de Montmorenci—negotiations which, whatever was the personal gain they brought to the Prince himself, were not devoid of advantages for Canada.

The assuming of the Viceroyalty of Canada by a member of the influentially wealthy Montmorenci family, came as a turning-point in Champlain's enterprise as a colonizer. He had spent three years away from his little capital, when this rift in the cloud revealed the sunshine of its silver lining. He had never given up hope, however some of his friends had. His integrity of purpose was as sound as a bell. He had never had recourse to unwholesome padding in his reports; and the facts of the country's resources, as therein divulged, stood as articles of faith in his pleadings in favour of Canada as a place of continuous residence. And, when Montmorenci showed a disposition to be more than a figure-head Viceroy, the cloud itself seemed to disperse. Ships and supplies began to be provided. The Company of

Digitized by Google

Merchants had to dip its hands deeper down into its pockets in support of the fiscal necessities of the governor. Even the king himself, Louis XIII.—with the reins of power now in his own hands—smiled upon Champlain's efforts, so far as to send to the pioneer-governor two personal letters, in which, while promising to provide him with the necessary garrison outfit and munition supplies, he counselled him to continue to train his people to be loyal to the laws of old France and true to the Catholic faith. This in itself was a reassurance which came none too soon. There had been some difference of opinion between the Company and Champlain in regard to the latter's official status. When Montmorenci assumed the Viceroyalty, it had been decreed that Champlain was to be Lieutenant of the Viceroy, with the title of Governor in Canada. There was to be no disputing of his authority as a colonizing agent and supreme civic overseer in Canada. And so bright had the prospect become that Champlain decided to inaugurate the new era of his rule by taking out his young bride with him, to grace the home-life he soon expected to see established under the shadows of Mont du Gas. As it was, a goodly company of pioneers, including the Heberts and the Couillards, had already gone out to Canada to examine with their own eyes the possibilities of the new land, if not to take an active part as permanent settlers during its first beginnings.

The romance of Champlain's propitious return to Quebec is one over which every Quebecer delights to linger, with the local colouring so near at hand. The country, discovered by Cabot and explored by Cartier, was at last within the threshold of a social organization. A woman of culture had come into its life. Madame

Digitized by Google

Champlain had dared the dangers of the Atlantic to bless in person her husband's western *protégé*. Known to him from her earliest years, Helène Boullé, the daughter of Monsieur Nicholas Boullé, the Secretary of the King's Chamber, had become the betrothed of the gallant Lieutenant of the Guards, who had forsaken the calling of a soldier to become an explorer, and whose reputation as such had been made while she was yet a schoolgirl. At the age of twenty-two she had been married to him, bringing a considerable dower; and at last, no doubt under the spell of her husband's enthusiasm, she had decided, perhaps not altogether unreluctantly, to provide in her own person a mistress for that many-gabled house of his, that stood at the water's edge of the Cul-de-Sac of Quebec, and which has gone down to history under the specialized name of "The *Habitation.*"

The voyage across was one marked by delays from contrary winds and foggy weather, the time spent on board being two months. There was quite a company of settlers accompanying the governor and his wife, whose expectancy must have made them impatient, days before the narrows of Belleisle had been sighted. For a day or so they learned from the explorer their first lesson of the hills and river mouths of the north shore of the great gulf. Passing the gap in the Laurentian Range that marks the chasm of the Saguenay, the first evidence of a human dwelling presented itself, in the one or two houses the peltry collectors had built, and in the Indian huts of Tadousac. There was some semblance of a hamlet about the place as seen from the water; and under the new arrangements, with the Duc de Montmorenci at the head of affairs and the peltry poacher again under ban, the Company of Merchants

Digitized by Google

had it in hand to erect its storehouse as the nucleus of a trading station that for a time was to rival Quebec as an outlet of the trade in furs. And after the wondrous habitable gap had appeared and disappeared as a geographical acquaintance to be remembered, an incident occurred, a full day's trip from Tadousac, which must have made the governor's bride feel for the moment that the land, so strange in its houseless appearance to her, was not to separate her from all the elements of the old home-life in her native land. Where the estuary tapers towards the Island of Orleans and the archipelago below it, the Laurentian Range runs out one of its titanic shoulders to the very edge of the river. There, under the shadow and shelter of the beetling bluff known as Cap Tourmente, are the rich meadow lands of St. Joachim, and even thus early there was a house or two on them, with a sprinkling of barns. It was here that Donnacona had given welcome to Jacques Cartier; and it was nothing unusual for small craft to be sent thus far from Quebec to lie in wait for expected inward-bound vessels, in order to anticipate intelligence of their approach. And on this occasion, as soon as this vessel of the new era for Quebec hove in sight, Madame Champlain's brother, Eustache Boullé, who had been in Canada for a year or two, arranged a surprise greeting for her, even before she had put her foot on land again. As he leaped from his rowboat on to the deck of the ship in which his sister was with her husband, the joy of the surprise shed itself on the whole company of pioneers and drove out of their minds all the worry over previous delays and the anguish of *mal de mer*.

And a further welcome awaited this vessel of the new

Digitized by Google

era and its complement of passengers, as it cast anchor opposite the *Habitation,* where the Cul-de-Sac gave inner moorage from the river. The little band of Quebecers there were at the time—a very small community indeed—had run to the *Habitation* as soon as the news was spread that the Master's vessel was in sight, coming up the north channel. The Indians also found their way down to the water front. The Recollet Fathers, who had built their little church a year before at the head of the Cul-de-Sac, made preparations for a commemorative service. A procession having been formed at the point of disembarkation, the whole population of the hamlet-capital wended their way to the little wooden edifice—the first place of worship erected in Canada—to listen with solemnity to the primitive service and the exhortations of good Father Jamay. After service, Champlain's commission, issued under the Crown seal and the new Viceroy's sign-manual, was duly read, while he, as deputy of the Viceroy and Governor in Canada, took the first step towards organizing his principality by appointing Louis Hebert, king's procurator; Gilbert Courseron, deputy-provost; and Joseph Nicholas, justice-clerk. And thus was Quebec at last established as the first community of permanent abode in the country.

The aspect of the place, after twelve years of fostering on the part of its founder, was not reassuring. Beyond the *Habitation,* the church and the storehouse and a few rambling sheds, there was as yet nothing striking about it save the picturesque character of its site. On the plateau above, which was reached by a narrow pathway from the Cul-de-Sac, there were only three clearances, one owned by Louis Hebert, who had been an apothecary in Paris; the second by William Couillard, who had

Digitized by Google

come out in the same vessel with the Heberts in 1617; and the third by Abraham Martin, the Scottish pilot, whose name has ever since been associated with the locality, in the Plains of Abraham and the thoroughfare of Cote d'Abraham. The *Habitation* was in a wretched plight. The roof was leaking, and the frosts of winter had snapped the nails and warped the sheathings of its chambers. The storehouse looked as if it would have to be taken down. Rubbish lay in the approaches and choked up the gangways and courtyard. Even the *Habitation's* garden, in which Champlain had taken such pride as a seed and vegetable testing ground, was in a wilderness state of neglect. But the resolute pioneer has a knack of overcoming difficulties without much grumbling. Willing hands, that had been idle for lack of supervision and encouragement, were soon busy as well for Madame Champlain and her three maiden attendants as for the governor himself. There were not wanting skilled carpenters and masons among the immigrants, and soon the building of Hebert's new house at the head of the pathway to the plateau, and the work on the Recollets' Monastery out on the St. Charles River were suspended, in order that the *Habitation* should be made wind and water tight, and the newly arrived *chatelaine* be provided with an abode fit to live in, until the contemplated Chateau on the brink of the rock above should afford her a dwelling suitable to her rank as the consort of a governor.

Nor does the romance exhaust itself in the activities of restoring the little capital of New France during Madame Champlain's stay in the country. A highly cultured woman endowed with the instincts of amiability can make herself a blessing anywhere. There had been

Digitized by Google

hardships to bear on the long voyage across the ocean, and there were hardships to face on land; but, with her husband and brother near her, and with full faith in their intentions of making something of Canada, she was ready at once to give active heed to the conditions of her new life in the west. It is said that she set to work without delay to learn the Huron tongue, and that, before the year was out, had command of it sufficiently well to be able to give instruction to the native children who could be enticed to receive it at her hands. The social refinement and civic security in which she had been reared in France no doubt came back to her as a regretful longing when her husband and brother were absent in their explorations, or when the hateful Iroquois were said to be lurking in the neighbourhood. But there is on record no mention either of regret or complaint as having come from her during the four years of her residence in Canada. By the villagers she was always respected as the beautiful lady of the governor's house, amiable and compassionate with young and old; while among the natives she was even looked upon as a kind of preternatural being, with her sweet smile as a perennial blessing for every one. Even the trinket of a looking-glass that hung by her side after the fashion of the ladies of Paris, was made a marvel of from another world, by the Indians. They had never before seen their swarthy faces reflected save in indistinct surfaces, and when once they had a peep at themselves in this portable portrait delineator, they were sure that there was in the little hand-glass a magic receptacle for their personality all the time.

These four years sanctify to us the beginnings of the "ancient capital." And what a pity it is that the his-

Digitized by Google

toriographers of the period have not told us more of this brave woman. The Recollet Sagard in his writings tells us nothing about Madame Champlain, does not even mention her, although, as Dr. James Douglas says, the Recollet Fathers must have been welcome guests in her *salon* at the *Habitation*. This same Father Sagard goes into minute details as to the manner of life of the Huron girls and the Indian women, yet refuses, as Dr. Douglas so courtly puts it, to give us a glimpse into the character and occupation of the first of that brilliant procession of French ladies whose beauty, charm of manner and conversation have made Quebec as famous as its scenery and commerce. How pleasant it would be, says the same writer, did we know first-hand from Sagard, how Madame Champlain engaged herself in "beautifying her rooms in the *Habitation*, in infusing a ray of refinement into the coarse habits of the trappers, soldiers, masons, and carpenters of the fort; to what extent she shared her husband's labours, whether she accompanied him in his shorter journeys and helped him in his clerical work, with whatever other domestic details would have shed some rays of the sunshine of human interest on those early years of the colony's history. Champlain's own nobility of character is displayed in nothing more conspicuous than in his own self-effacement and in his reticence regarding his own doings; and we readily understand that his native refinement would revolt against any parade of his wife's virtues and good deeds. In any case, between the spleen or the modesty of the priestly historian and the chivalry of the soldier chronicler, about all that we know of Madame Champlain is that she landed in Canada in 1620 and that she re-embarked for France in 1624." The gap, it may be said, however,

Digitized by Google

has not been left vacant by our poets and imaginative writers, to the justification at last of the playwright in his final touching up of the romantic episode, in the Drama herein exploited in Three Acts, not without trepidation as to its reception.

Meanwhile the Fort St. Louis was having its foundation walls laid on the

> Eagle's eyry that defiance bade
> To cunning lurking in the glades around,—

on the precipice edge of the meadow lands of the Grande Place, and at the head of the steep pathway leading to them. For the erection there was plenty of indurated claystone to be found on all sides of the promontory, and the Company of Merchants sent out in their ships the necessary lime and slate and building accessories. The hammer and saw and the voices of the workmen enlivened the vicinity with the sounds of industry. Quebec was in the way of being made a place of fortified strength. It was entering upon its military career—a place safe to live in, possibly a place to be proud of. Between upper and lower town the governor was on wing from morning to night, while the work progressed, praying no doubt for a full season of summer weather to bring the main building at least to completion.

But that full season of summer weather was not to be given him without its surprise and interruption. One day his old comrade and friend, the faithful Pontgravé, who had sailed with him and for him in many an expedition, anchored his vessel outside the Cul-de-Sac. And a strangely unexpected story he had to tell. The Company of Merchants and Champlain had got on fairly

Digitized by Google

well together. The former had not entirely neglected his pleadings nor his necessities. They had been stingy enough at times in meeting his full demands, and certainly had not carried out in every respect the terms of their charter, especially in the matter of sending out settlers and in providing for the support of the Recollet missionaries. This neglect, though borne patiently with by Champlain, soon became known to the peltry poachers and the jealous fur-traders at home. A cry was therefore raised against the monopolists, and even reached the ears of the king. The matter was finally brought home to the Duc de Montmorenci; and Pontgravé had come to Quebec laden with exchange goods, and with corroboration of the announcement to his old master that a rival Company had been organized by the Sieurs Guillaume and Emery de Caën, uncle and nephew, to share in the fur trade on equal terms with the existing Company of Merchants. And, when Champlain came into possession of the full details of the new movement, there was nothing for him to do but to temporize and await results.

These results were not long in coming. There could be no peace between the two companies and their agents. In trade rivalries there is as much bitterness as in religious envyings, and there was an element of both in the strife which arose, for the De Caëns were Huguenots. Before the season was over, Champlain's authority as civic ruler had been virtually set at naught, in face of his lack of arms and militia resources. The building improvements had to be all but suspended for want of funds; while the fur-trade, the only staple industry in the country as yet, was again placed in jeopardy. The mixing up of colonization and mercantile adventure was

Digitized by Google

again bearing bitter fruit, with the paying of tribute to the civil authorities more or less of a dead letter.

The governor had eventually to send representations to his superior officer the Viceroy, accompanied with a remonstrance from the colonists, lay and cleric. The welfare of the country—nay, its very existence as an organized dependency of the Crown—was being imperilled. The Company of Merchants had been exaggeratingly defamed, and its monopoly rights too hastily interfered with. It had not been given full time and opportunity to implement the terms of its charter; and now the welfare of the colony was being sadly interrupted and all building progress at a standstill, from the refusal of both companies to contribute funds for colonization purposes until it had been decided which of them had a monopoly in more than name.

The effect of the remonstrance on the Viceroy was to bring about something of a compromise. A new company was formed under a revised and extended charter, merging the two companies into one, to be known as the Company of Montmorency, and leaving the door open for any French trader, who by taking stock in the "merger" could become qualified, to send ships to Canada. Champlain's status as governor was reasserted, and provision made for a fiscal revenue. Immigration was to be more actively encouraged, intending settlers to be brought out in the Company's vessels free of charge. A larger subsidy was to be paid to the Recollets, so that their mission in the regions beyond Quebec might be amplified. Yet, after all, it was but the old story of fair promises to be forgotten in the race for personal wealth, promises akin to those of the years before and after, made only to be broken, with starvation facing the paltry

Digitized by Google

band of pioneers that remained at Quebec because they could not find the means of going back to France.

And, in proof of this, we have only to learn that Champlain, in a worse plight than ever for lack of funds and material to complete his new fort and his old *Habitation,* had again to leave for France in 1624, to repeat his former pleadings in high places for a more generous and stable support towards the carrying out of his colonization plans. On this occasion he took with him his gentle and loving wife, having made up his mind to leave her in France until affairs in New France assumed a more reassuring aspect. Along with him also went Gabriel Sagard, the Recollet historical narrator, to plead the cause of his mission in the charitable and religious circles of Paris.

Nor did matters very materially mend for Quebec when the Duc de Montmorenci, wearied out with the recurring bickerings, commercial and religious, connected with the affairs of his Viceroyalty, handed over his interest to the Duc de Ventadour, his nephew. The missionary enterprise of the Recollets found ready favour in the eyes of the new Viceroy, who is said to have been connected with a religious order in his earlier years. With the best of motives, no doubt, for the Christianizing of the Indians, Ventadour at once suggested that the Jesuits should take part with the Recollets in disseminating the Catholic faith in the western wilds—a suggestion that was immediately carried out by the establishing of a Jesuit establishment on the spot where Jacques Cartier spent his first winter in Canada. The vineyard had need of labourers, and there would hardly be any rivalry between the two religious orders, as there had been between the two mercantile companies, unless

Digitized by Google

they differed as to how the Huguenots in the colony were to be treated, as a preliminary to the conversion of the savages. Indeed, no one disputed the wisdom of sending out the Jesuit Fathers as the allies of the Recollets.

But, when it came to Champlain's colonizing plans, the old story of cheese-paring repeated itself. There was placed in his hands a new commission, with full authority to build forts; to appoint administrative officers; to make peace or war with the Indians as a right policy suggested; to discover, if possible, a route to China and the Indies, by way of the St. Lawrence; and to launch any other venture that would serve in the development of the country. And all this he was to do from the tribute drawn from the fur-traders, beyond the prospect, moreover, of even a franc-piece from the royal exchequer towards enforcing payment of the said tribute.

On his return in 1626, he was at once to learn how far he might rely on the traders for assistance. The De Caëns had charge of the consolidated company's storehouses at Tadousac and Quebec, and in status claimed second, if not equal, rank with Champlain. Though there had been no open friction between them and their governor, there was to be seen at times something of a rivalry in minor matters which did not escape the notice of the artizans and labourers around the fort. Champlain, no doubt wishing to obviate any suspicion of unfriendliness, appointed Emery de Caën, the nephew, his deputy, when he left for France with his wife and Father Sagard, with instructions to him to continue the work on the fortifications, naturally thinking he would willingly be at some outlay in behalf of the Company. But what was his surprise to find, on his return two

Digitized by Google

years after, that Fort St. Louis and its enclosures were no further advanced than when he left. The enclosing wall was raised no higher than its foundations. The repairs needful to keep his dwelling, down near the Cul-de-Sac, in a habitable state had been unheeded. Some of the necessary buildings within the fort had not even been commenced. And, when he made inquiry concerning the neglect, he found that his workmen had been put to other work directly profitable to the Company. This was certainly anything but a grateful return for the complacency and favour which had led to the aggrandizement of the De Caëns in France and Canada, while the two companies were being consolidated into one, with these gentlemen at its head. And yet such conduct was only a definite, tangible illustration of the old story of bad faith—a pertinent proof of the callousness of corporations in their greed for the largest dividends, outside of all suffering or neglect of duty,

And suffering there had been. The sixty or seventy people of the hamlet-capital, not to speak of the Indians' poverty and want, had been reduced to cruel straits during the governor's absence from the lack of food and the common necessaries of living. The Company's officers had actually kept back provisions and clothing from the needy colonists, sore contending with hunger and the severity of the climate, though everybody knew that there was stock enough of both stored away on their premises. And this was but the beginning of worse to follow in the shape of parsimony, before the very eyes of Champlain himself.

The king, of course, was too engrossed with the troublous times nearer home to give heed to the affairs of a handful of people in a colony so remote. The Thirty

Digitized by Google

Years' War had not run a third of its course. The rivalry of Richelieu and Buckingham was at its bitterest. The mind of the former was too much occupied with European entanglements to worry over the fortification of a French village in the wilderness, which the powers with whom France was at war had probably never thought of as a place worth possessing. The De Caëns, therefore, on the strength of a seemingly assured apathy on the part of those who were supreme over Champlain and themselves, began to feel that they had a free hand. The trade of the St. Lawrence was virtually within their grasp; and, like their predecessors, they were intent on finding their own immediate money gain, the only golden egg there was in the country. Their obligations to Champlain and his colony they had made light of, as the other companies had done, in face of his complacent remonstrances; and, now that their conduct was likely to continue to be unquestioned in high places, they were ready to disregard them altogether.

During the winter of 1626 there was a dearth of provisions in Quebec, with the governor helpless in his fort to enforce a remedy. In the following year the Company's vessels brought out an insufficient supply, and the winter months of that year were for the colonists a season of want and suffering and deepening gloom. There were only one or two families in the place who could make ends meet from the labour of their own hands, independent of the Company. Colonization was at a standstill. Mercantile adventure was again having it all its own way. The De Caëns had taken no steps to bring out the right kind of settlers for the farm, nor had they encouraged in any way their sub-agents, peltry collectors and labourers to cultivate a garden, far less a

Digitized by Google

field of grain. There were, therefore, no food supplies of the country's own growing and harvesting with which to ward off famine. And, as winter dragged its weary length along after another year of neglect, the only hope of relief lay in the arrival of the Company's ships when the ice had left the river.

There was no excuse for the conduct of the Company. When Emery de Caën collected his trading yawls in the autumn and sent them to Tadousac, he could not but know the plight in which he was leaving Quebec. One thing he did not know of, and that was the troubling of the waters in France over the niggardly cupidity of the Company. During the summer of 1626, the Jesuit Fathers, fearing a second scarcity of food in the place, had laden a vessel, at their own charges, with supplies for their establishment out on the St. Charles, only to have the elder De Caën place an embargo on its sailing, on the plea that it was an infringement on the Company's rights. Such heartlessness passed unchallenged for the moment. But, knowing what the outcome would be, the priests secured one of the smaller craft from Tadousac; and, huddling on board the workmen employed about their mission station, sent them back to France to escape the famine which, even with few mouths to fill, was otherwise unavoidable. The De Caëns had overreached themselves. The incident was brought to the attention of the great Richelieu. This led to a closer looking into the conduct of the Company; and, even before the walls of the besieged Rochelle, the busy statesman spared a moment to think over the problem of a colony whose development might solve other problems for him in France.

Outside of Champlain's remonstrances and the repre-

Digitized by Google

sentations of the missionaries, the tardy growth of Quebec was in itself an argument carrying the conviction that there was something radically amiss in the plans for the colonization of Canada. The resources of the country in fish, fur and lumber had been established as a fact that could not be gainsaid. Yet twenty years and over had been frittered away in all but useless effort to make it anything of a place to live in. No more than two or three score of people looked upon the country as their permanent home; whereas there was in such a vast territory elbow-room for all the restless elements of France's population, and a wealth of resources that might make it a second France in its own right. And the master mind of Europe was not slow to grasp the situation, now that he had been induced to look into the matter. Richelieu had just had added to his multifarious functions and political cares the direct oversight of the commercial interests of the kingdom, and he saw very soon that something might and must be done for his royal master's vast domain in the west. The De Caëns and their close-fisted policy must be set aside. A new trading company had to be formed, which would be faithful to the higher trust of fostering emigration from France, as well as the spread of the Catholic religion among the heathen tribes of the colony that had been so sadly neglected.

And when Cardinal Richelieu's plan for the better development of New France was finally matured in its various details, there was much about it to secure the favour of the capitalists of the kingdom. Though launched under the official title of the Company of New France, the more familiar name, "The Hundred Associates," was given to it, when its members increased to

Digitized by Google

that number and over. The list of the names of these associates, which is still extant, indicates how stable the foundations of the new venture were laid. Richelieu placing himself at the head of it, the nobility joined with the wealthy *bourgeoisie,* prominent churchmen with king's officers, the merchant princes of Paris with the prosperous traders of Rouen, Bordeaux and Dieppe, in taking up the shares—all seemingly zealous to foster the affairs of France in the far west, under such distinguished auspices—all seizing the chance of trading in their own right. According to its charter, the new company engaged to take out at least four thousand settlers within fifteen years; to furnish them with farms and farming appliances; to provide for their maintenance until the land should yield enough for their support; and to see to the support and safeguarding of a proper clergy, who would look after their religious and educational needs as well as the immediate conversion of the natives. In a word, the old story of promises handed down as a legacy from company to company was as luminous as ever, with a few deeper tints, perhaps, of golden expectancy about it.

And what were the Hundred Associates to receive in return for all their promises? They were to have sovereign sway from Newfoundland to the sources of the St. Lawrence, and from Florida to Labrador and farther north, if they could get farther north. They were to have a perpetual monopoly of the fur trade, and a fifteen years' monopoly of all other commercial undertakings within these bounds. All goods exported from the country to France were to be admitted duty free, and *vice versa.* The king made promise of supplying two warships, to be maintained and equipped at his own expense.

Digitized by Google

The supreme oversight was, of course, to be in the hands of the king, but the executive would be solely in the hands of the officials of the Company. Indeed, with Cardinal Richelieu as Viceroy residing in France, and Champlain his deputy as Governor in Quebec, the Company of the Hundred Associates was simply another of the several monopoly ventures, abounding for the moment in financial resources, but with two interests to serve, one of them, their own interest, being naturally paramount; and, as effect following its cause, the old story of comparative failure could not but repeat itself, whatever the seeming instant prospects might be. The master mind of Europe, far-reaching as it had been in aggrandizing the affairs of old France for a period of twenty years, had not yet solved for New France the problem of its speedy settlement.

The formation of the new company meant commercial discomfiture for the Sieurs de Caën. As things stood, they would have a year's breathing space. The Hundred Associates would not be able to take charge of the affairs of the country till 1628, and it was naturally expected at Quebec that the vessels of the De Caëns would come out as usual with supplies for the colonists, even should the ships of the new company fail to appear upon the scene till later in the season. But, whether from niggardliness or spite, Emery de Caën was again to seize the chance of playing Champlain false. The supplies left in the fall of 1627 were as insufficient as in 1626, and during the winter of that year the people of Quebec were again hard pressed for food and clothing. The prospect of double supplies in the following spring encouraged them to bear up against their penury, and all the better since Champlain was with them to counsel

Digitized by Google

patience and a policy of share-and-share-alike with what little they had.

The ice left the river about the usual time, but no vessel appeared in May, nor even in June of 1628. The scanty products of the chase, with some meat from the almost empty cattle-sheds of Cap Tourmente, supplemented the short rations of farinaceous foods to which the men around the fort were by this time reduced. Hebert and the Jesuit Fathers had still some breadstuffs left, and these they shared with their neighbours, though they needed every ounce of them for their own sustenance until the ships should come. But would the ships ever come—the ships of the De Caëns or of the new company? That was the question which now agitated the little community, day in and day out. The brave-hearted, complacent Champlain did his best to allay impatience, with his own patience fast wearing out, as he saw so many crying out for food and having none to give them. What a blessing it had been, he must have thought at times, that his young and tenderly brought-up wife was not now with him, to witness the increasing distress.

At length he decided to make an effort to intercept some of the Breton fishermen—those of them who had fishing stations at Gaspé—to learn if no intelligence was to be had of the ships of the De Caëns. But when he made search for a boat there was nothing seaworthy to be had. In terms of Emery de Caën's orders, the larger vessels of their company had been placed in winter quarters at Tadousac. At last an old abandoned tub of a boat, gaping at the sides, was found, which the workmen at the fort did their best to put into sailing shape, improvising, as they did, a precarious calking for its weathered

Digitized by Google

seams by a blend of Cap Tourmente tallow, canoe gum, and fragments of old rope. There was excitement in the padding up of every chink, hope in every plank renewed, though the excitement was nothing to what was to arise in the little community ere the hazardous craft was well launched. The hope of rescue was not to be realized in the way expected.

At the end of the first week in July, two men arrived from Cap Tourmente, bringing the news of strange happenings near the meadow lands. An English vessel, having anchored off the elephantine-shaped headland, had sent several of its crew ashore, who had harried the hay-sheds and houses, and set fire to them, besides carrying off two or three of the workmen, who had been unable to escape their clutches. The men bringing the tidings said that they had identified several of the marauders as Frenchmen whom they had seen at Tadousac the year before, maintaining that they could not be other than Huguenots, since they had sacrilegiously destroyed the altar and sacred vessels they had found in one of the houses, where the Recollets went occasionally to celebrate Mass. Champlain knew at once, and only too well, what the men's story meant. An echo of the strife around Rochelle had been wafted across the ocean, and the English would soon be heard from nearer Quebec. The vessels of the De Caëns were no longer to be expected, nor any succour from the new company either.

On the following day a message was sent to Quebec, demanding the surrender of the place to the English. The message came from the fleet under the command of Sir David Kirke. Champlain, notwithstanding the severe straits he was in—after a full winter spent in

Digitized by Google

presence of starvation, and with a possible repetition of the same to encounter during the winter to follow, if the Company's ships were prevented from coming up the river—returned for answer an instant refusal. Kirke prudently took the refusal at its safer estimate, for he was not only unaware of the actual state of affairs at Quebec, but knew of the approach of certain relief vessels that had been sighted near the Gaspé coast. This French relief squadron consisted of four war-sloops and several transports, laden with supplies for the colonists, under the command of Commodore Roquemont, a member of the Company of the Hundred Associates. Had it only arrived ahead of Kirke, as it ought to have done if the Company had been alive to the interests of the colony, all would, no doubt, have been well with Quebec to withstand the demand for surrender with some show of force, even in presence of the dilapidated Fort St. Louis, dismantled, as it was, from roof to fallen towers by the severe frosts and heavy eastern storms. As things happened, Kirke, wisely for himself and unfortunately for Champlain, turned his back upon Quebec, and, in a fifteen hours' engagement, seized De Roquemont's fleet and all his food supplies, carrying off the greater part of his relief equipment back with him to England, and thus leaving Champlain again face to face with his terrible privations of more than one winter, with no relief from any trading company now possible.

The De Caëns, with their trading privileges not yet expired, left Quebec to its own resources, as far as their vessels were concerned. Their inhumanity is not to be spoken of but with indignation. None of their ships came near Quebec in its moment of privation. Quebec was left alone in the wilderness, with no knowledge

Digitized by Google

reported to the community around the Cul-de-Sac, of what was going on in the outer world, not even of De Roquemont's capture, until ten months after. The dismal prospect before the little starving colony is thus told by the long-suffering and basely-wronged Champlain himself:

"While we were impatiently awaiting news of the battle we were continuing to distribute our small stock of pulse. Many of our men were beginning to give signs of bodily weakness. Even our supply of salt was giving out. To reduce the peas to meal and thus make them more palatable and nourishing, I first thought of extemporizing a wooden mortar, but finally decided to try to make a hand-mill. Our blacksmith found a spindle and mill-stones, and the carpenter undertook to mount them. Thus necessity compelled us to do what for twenty years had seemed impossible. Everyone brought his allowance of peas, and it was returned to him as flour. When the eel season arrived the fish relieved our wants. The Indians are expert fishermen, but were only willing to give us a few, and for these they made us pay right dearly. The men bartered even their clothes for eels, and those at the Company's storehouse secured twelve hundred of the slimy creatures in exchange for fresh beaver-skins, the price demanded being one skin for ten eels. Great hopes had been entertained of the grain products of Hebert's farm; but, when the harvest was garnered, all that could be spared was nine and a half ounces of barley, peas and Indian meal—a scanty allowance for so many people."

And the record of the rest of the struggle is one of the most pathetic on the pages of history. Indeed, it was no other than a blessing to the poor, starving set-

Digitized by Google

tlers when the English took the place in the following summer of 1629, considering how far they were cut off from relief from the Company under whose auspices the trade of the place was supposed to be. Every effort was made by Champlain to keep up the spirits of the colonists by giving them something to do, even if it were on the restoration of the fort, without arms and ammunition to make it of service against the weakest of assailants; or on the building of a flour-mill with no corn to grind in it; or in the repairing of that tumble-down boat of his, with no purpose now to serve by launching it, save the removal of some of the colonists from the scene of starvation, if they could happily find their way in it as far as Gaspé, where they might ask for help from the Breton fishermen there, or possibly secure a passage home to France with them.

When the winter months had once more dragged out their weary agonizing length, a number of the colonists decided to trust themselves to the deep in the vessel which had been patched up sufficiently to ward off serious leakage. Poor old, rheumatic Pontgravé, who had been living in Quebec all during its sore distress, was at first prevailed on to take charge of it, but, having some disagreement with Champlain over a question of precedence, he finally thought it his duty to refuse the precarious command. It was Eustache Boullé, Champlain's brother-in-law, who latterly took charge of the dubious argosy. Fortunately for him and those in his charge, the boat was captured by Kirke before it reached the perils of the open sea, and while that naval officer was on his way up the estuary to renew his demand for the surrender of Quebec. The capture of "Le Coquin," as this vessel of six or seven tons was called, stands on

Digitized by Google

record as the preliminary step towards what is called the first siege of Quebec, though there was little in that event save the arranging of the terms between the two opponents.

During the preceding months of 1629, the privations, which beset the earliest citizens of what is now no mean city, were so severe that it seems incredible that any of them survived. After "Le Coquin" had sailed, reducing the number of mouths to feed by about a third, the fight against short rations continued. Indeed, the poor people, and even Champlain himself, were at last reduced to a soup made from the roots of the plant called Solomon's Seal, with wood ashes boiled in it to reduce the sickening bitterness, and with not a pinch of salt in the settlement to improve the flavour.

It is not necessary to give here the full details of this, the so-called first siege of Quebec. The prize which fell into the hands of Sir David Kirke was one hardly worth the taking, as far as the personal property found near Cape Diamond was concerned. Company after company, from De Monts' time down to the heartless *régime* of the De Caëns, had left the growth of Quebec very much where they had found it. The English gained possession of it, but for three years hardly knew what to do with it; and, when Champlain returned in 1633 to assume control of its affairs, in the name of the Company of the Hundred Associates, it was only to give the mixing up of mercantile adventure another chance in the carrying out of its retarding policy.

The inventory of the military and other effects, which Champlain had to hand over to Kirke, corroborates all that has been said about the neglect which the Company of Montmorency, with the De Caëns as its execu-

Digitized by Google

tive officers, meted out to Champlain's proposals in behalf of colonization. The armament, placed at the disposal of a Viceroy's deputy, was hardly sufficient to maintain order in a small provincial town, and in no way competent to uphold the supremacy of a European power of the first rank against the raids of war-enduring savages or the possible attacks of such invaders as Sir David Kirke. There were a few brass guns, with the scantiest stock of ammunition to make them serviceable. There were some whole and broken muskets, two or three arquebuses, a dozen or so of pikes and halberts, sixty incomplete cuirasses, with only forty pounds of gunpowder in the magazine, and that the property of the De Caëns. At the time of the capture of the place, as Champlain admitted to Kirke, his men had been living for the space of two months on nothing but roots.

All told, there could not have been many more than eighty persons in the place when it was transferred to the enemy, only twenty-one of whom elected to remain in the country when the change of political masters occurred. The little capital was at its beginning again, with no clipping of the wings as yet in sight for the monopolist company, which continued to think more of its own gains in dividends than the common welfare of the community. Champlain had proved the soil and climate in his garden near the brink of the river; but Kirke found only a few acres under cultivation, and these for the most part under the oversight of the Recollet and Jesuit Fathers, out on the Little River, as the St. Charles was called. And, when the restoration took place in 1632—when the Sieurs de Caën were sent out to enjoy their year of grace and unravel the tangle that had arisen over their demands against both the

Digitized by Google

French and British governments—there did not seem to be anything worth taking into account save the profits of the fur trade by poaching or otherwise. During the Kirkes' *régime,* an effort was made to organize an English company, to be known as the Company of Canada, but it ended in nothing for colonization, as the capture of Quebec ended in nothing for either of the brothers, save the trumping up on the part of the De Caëns of a balance against Sir David Kirke for the beaver skins which Champlain had delivered up to him. Indeed, the seizure of Quebec was not only a serious financial blow to the Hundred Associates, but a heavy money loss to the Kirkes. Although starting with a capital of three hundred thousand *livres,* the new company was so far reduced in their immediate resources that they were not sorry to give the De Caëns a free hand for the first year of the restoration, in ridding Canada of the influences of the English company. Louis Kirke had been first citizen in Quebec for two years, while the De Caëns had a full year of rule before Champlain arrived on the scene again, as governor, in 1633.

The return of Champlain was a time for thanksgiving among the settlers. There was, no doubt, a longing for and a looking forward to his coming back, on the part of the twenty-one who had elected to remain in Quebec after its capture—including Madame Hubou, the remarried widow of Louis Hebert, Guillaume Couillard, her son-in-law, Abraham Martin, Nicholas Pivert, Pierre Desportes, and others—as there must have been many an exchange of views on the subject, before and after Mass in the Hebert homestead, or out at the monastery of the Jesuits. With his coming, Quebec was expected to take rank as a town whose affairs were to be regulated

Digitized by Google

by the government officials of the country, and not by such as the De Caëns, or any other trading company.

After his arrival Champlain had many things to do, to infuse new life into the colony, with only two years of his own life to run. The Company had provided him with three vessels, partially supplied with cannon, and having on board nearly two hundred immigrants. His pathway was, however, beset with many problems, not the least of them being the financial straits of the Company itself, which, before it rid itself of them temporarily, had to have a subsidiary company come to its rescue. Another difficulty was the winning over of the Indians up the river to trade with the French, to the exclusion of all traders of foreign extraction. Some idea of the extent of the fur trade may be drawn from the fact that the De Caëns employed as many as one hundred and fifty workmen, exporting as many as twenty thousand beaver skins annually, not to speak of other peltries. Another difficulty was the insufferable wrong-doing of the traders in distributing among their savage customers intoxicating liquors when bargaining for the products of the winter's chase. And still another trouble was the bad feeling engendered from religious differences, that would sometimes burst out even within the precincts of the fort and the storehouse. Yet, before the fatal day came, when the man and hero, who had done so much while abiding by his purpose in opposition to callous neglect, had to withdraw from his life's work, there were many evidences of an approaching permanency in the way of living in Canada. The Fort St. Louis was finished and had several houses erected near it, on or near the Grande Place. There were also several new houses erected around the Cul-de-Sac and

Digitized by Google

along the water front as far as what was known as Storehouse Point. More than two hundred wage-earners had taken up a permanent abode in the scattered little capital. Tadousac and Three Rivers were also beginning to have permanent settlers. The missions of the Jesuits were being pushed far beyond the confines of Quebec. The elements of civilization were gathering. The Chapelle de Recouvrance, which Champlain had built as the outcome of a vow, provided church accommodation for the growing populace. Besides the encampment at Sillery, with its mission house and missionaries, there were similar hamlets springing up along the river, with a white man or two known of in them as the harbingers of better days to come.

The Company, however, was not cured of its greed for gain in the shape of dividends in Champlain's time nor for long after his death. Nay, not even up to the time of the country becoming a Crown Colony was its cheese-paring and retarding selfishness entirely scotched. Before Champlain passed from the scene, the impetus, nevertheless, had been given to public affairs in the colony, that was finally to override this curbing of the growth of the country by the self-seeking of commercial adventure; and long may that overriding continue in the name of all civic probity and ethical advancement.

As an emphasis of what has been said on this score, our historians give ample support. Dr. Henry Miles, in his "Old Régime," an excellent work emanating from a scholarly pen, claims that had the various commercial companies followed up their first efforts by continuing to pay year by year due regard to the fulfilment of their obligations, then would this colony of New France soon have become considerable in numbers and marketable

Digitized by Google

resources, and have been in a position to ward off the lamentable train of miseries by which it came to be afflicted afterwards, through neglect, internal weakness, dissension, and external hostility.

And Dr. James Douglas, in his "Quebec in the Seventeenth Century," the most scholarly work on early Quebec that has yet been written in English, has a like opinion to express. "For twenty years," he says, "the experiment lasted of trying to build up a colony on the basis of a narrow and exclusive national policy through the agency of a commercial company. The State desired to see the valley of the St. Lawrence inhabited, but shrank from entrusting power to any company which would encourage individual initiative. The Church strove to convert the savages, and would gladly have peopled the great waste with industrious Frenchmen. The trading companies, even if their personal interests had induced them to promote immigration, which was not the case, offered but scanty encouragement to an enterprising merchant or to a labourer. Neither could engage in trade without infringing on the Company's exclusive privileges. A man could not take up land—although the whole continent lay before him unoccupied—without a special grant from the French Crown. He could not follow his native instincts and join a roving Indian band, without falling under the stricture of the home government. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that, after twenty-one years of such adverse conditions, the colony, including the priests, numbered somewhat less than a hundred souls, and that only a paltry acre or two was under cultivation."

And again, in referring to the Company of the Hundred Associates, the same historian says: "The new

Digitized by Google

company, composed of one hundred good men and true, actuated by zeal for the glory of France and the conversion of the heathen, would, it was assumed, be willing to put aside their selfish interests in favour of the public good, and thus build up an empire in the New World which, costing France nothing, would yet redound enormously to her profit and renown. As we shall see, it required only a few years to dispel the illusion and prove that human greed and selfishness are not extinguished by the acceptance of any religious shibboleth; and that even sincere and earnest endeavour to propagate a religious faith may co-exist with vicious rules incapable of being reconciled with the dictates of patriotism. Moreover, the Company's career made it evident that commercial projects opposed to the public interest, and therefore provoking opposition, cannot possibly prosper."

The other side of the story was, of course, dismal enough. The accounts of the Hundred Associates set forth that, even before the death of Champlain, they had lost over three million *livres* from their exploitations in New France. They had equipped, in all, three fleets, before and after the siege of Quebec, and these fleets had all met with disaster. Even after the subsidiary company came to their rescue, they continued in financial straits, from which there was no avowed relief, though in four years the fur trade netted for them a profit of eighty-five thousand *livres*. They had, therefore, their own burden to bear, while neglecting the industrial colonization of the country. It was a losing game at both ends of the neglect. As late as 1644, they had totally failed to carry out the terms of their charter. Even after Canada had become a Crown Colony the

Digitized by Google

Company kept up their commercial interruptions to the welfare of the country. They had made large concessions to speculators for distribution of lands to possible settlers, but these retained their grants in the interest of the fur trade, and gave, in their turn, a cold shoulder to colonization. The company also retained the exclusive privilege of importing from France what the colonists wanted in the shape of food or clothing and building accessories, fixing, as their officers thought fit, the market value of all furs gathered, and forcing the people to buy everything they needed at the highest prices. And this was the commercial tyranny which Champlain had to face in its earlier phases as well as in its later practices.

The critic who says that Champlain was not a great man has probably a method of his own in measuring greatness—from events and environment, perhaps, and not from innateness of character. Be this as it may, Champlain was in at the opening of the first epoch of Canadian progress, and there would have been no fruits, as far as one can see, from that epoch, had it not been for him. He stood resolutely by his mission and saw it on its way towards maturescence in the centuries to follow. To Quebecers and all Canadians he has assumed the proportions of a great man. The city of Quebec and the country at large stands as his best monument to-day, outside of the art of the sculptor or the dramatist or the historian who would amplify or detract from the greatness we Canadians have discerned in him. Not many years ago fifty thousand people witnessed the unveiling of his monument near the site of his old home in the Fort St. Louis, afterwards the Chateau St. Louis. Six million Canadians accepted the event as one of the

Digitized by Google

greatest national interest. The city he founded is having, in this year of grace 1908, its three hundredth birthday celebrated, as a national event, by thousands of expectant celebrants; and the prophecy has just gone forth from the greatest Canadian pioneer of the present century that, in time, fifty millions of people will be within the coasts of Canada to celebrate subsequent centenary celebrations, in which the names of Canada, Quebec and Champlain will always be found grouped as a *gamme de trois* they fondly love to listen to.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Champlain

A Drama in Three Acts

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Argument

THE preceding article, "Twenty Years and After," discloses the argument of the following drama in historical detail, as an antagonism between the self-interest of the trader and the steadfast purpose of the colonizer. The various scenes pourtray the nobility of Champlain's perseverance in presence of the meanness of spirit inherent in the recurring trading companies and their representatives, who were for ever breaking faith with their obligations, to the detriment of the pioneers. The elaboration of the contrast between the constancy of beneficence and the inconstancy of self-seeking is the main intention of the piece; with Beauchasse and the De Caëns as persistents in the one case, and Champlain and Pontgravé in the other, sustained, as the latter were, by the loyalty of such as Hebert and Couillard, and the benign womanliness of Madame Champlain.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Dramatis Personae

CHAMPLAIN, *Governor of New France.*
PONTGRAVÉ, *the mariner-trader of St. Malo.*
NICOLAS BOULLÉ, *Secretary of the King's Chamber, Paris.*
LOUIS HEBÉRT, *pioneer settler.*
GUILLAUME COUILLARD, *pioneer settler.*
ETIENNE JONQUÊT, *Hebért's son-in-law.*
MONSIEUR L'ANGE, *poet, friend of the Boullés.*
SIEUR DE CAEN, *of the trading company.*
EMERY DE CAEN, *his nephew.*
BEAUCHASSE, *clerk of the old trading company.*
JEAN DUVAL *and* ANTOINE NATEL, *conspirators.*
PIERRE CHAVIN, *Champlain's chief clerk at the Habitation.*
CAPTAIN BLAIS, *of the company's ship.*
BAPTISTE GUERS, *commissioné.*
GILBERT COURSERON, *constable.*

Kirke's envoy, coureurs-de-bois, the doctor of the ship, attendants, sailors, conspirators, Indians, and others.

PÈRES AND FRÈRES.

FATHERS GEORGE, JOSEPH, JAMAY, D'OLBEAU, LE CARON, DU PLESSIS, LE JEUNE, BREBEUF, *secular priests, and others.*

FEMALE CHARACTERS.

MADAME CHAMPLAIN, MADAME BOULLÉ, ANNE HEBÉRT, GUILLEMETTE HEBÉRT, MADAME HEBÉRT, *attendants and others.*

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Champlain

A Drama in Three Acts

ACT I. SCENE 1.

JEAN DUVAL, *blacksmith,* ANTOINE NATEL *and three other conspirators discover themselves in the Stadacona*[1] *woods on the plateau overlooking the harbour of Quebec.*

JEAN DUVAL.[2] There is no end to toil and ill-requiting
While grows this *Habitation.*[3] Day in
Day out, there's naught but hack and haste:
From forge aglow and clanging anvil din,
I would be rid of all, to run afield.

ANTOINE NATEL. Ah, Jean Duval, of name akin in sound,
You are the devil when your rage is swollen;
Out with it, then, and say what 'tis you'd do.
Are we not sharers in this shifting game
That's woo'd us from old France?

DUVAL. What would I do?
What are these forests for, while yet they hide
Away the wealth to make us rightly rich?
Are we to slave and miss high recompense?
Masters 'tis ours to be, not pioneers' trulls,

Digitized by Google

Whose measured meagre fare betokens worse
In days to come. What would I we should do?
Draw hither, fellows, while I speak my mind.

[*The five Conspirators draw together and seat themselves on two fallen trees that form a convenient angle for their convention des cinq.*

Hist, ask not how nor why I speak to you.
Forests have ears and we must compass ours,
Nor run them o'er, Champlain[4] must not return
To France. His doom is here, where is our hope.
All this and that and far beyond is ours,
To give away or to retain as men of might—
A nest of pirates, if you will, or Spanish dons,
Recking no mock of interferences
From friend or foe, from France or foreign straint.

NATEL. A very devil, say I, Jean, you are:
Treason's your trade as I will answer for't.

DUVAL. That's as it may. But neither are you milkish,
Casting your rightful own away on one
That ne'er may live to use it here or yonder.
Are you a croak, Antoine Natel, or but
A charity scab, who fain would emulate
Your fare of ugsome eels and mildewed pulse,[5]
To play obeisance to a would-be lord?

NATEL. Speak on: I listen as do these our friends.
We would be rich, as what Parisian would not,
Though wealth comes ill from shedding human blood.

Digitized by Google

There is no hindrance in these wilds to stay
Our aims, were Champlain baned from France and us.
Is't that you mean, as think we other four?
If so, let's swear, hand unto sworn-on hand,
And I will be your second.

DUVAL. Well said, Antoine!
Brawn and the daring that have brought us here,
To straighten out the twistings of life's iron
With pioneer blows—these be our stock-in-trade;
And if the trading's dulled by rivalry,
'Tis ours to close the opposition shop,
And make what terms we please, while yet these lands,
With all their tawny serfs, are free to us,
Barring this master of the *Habitation.*

[*Alarm from an approaching figure.*

NATEL. 'Tis he himself!

DUVAL. Champlain? He must not see!
Haste through the glade by different ways, and meet
Me by the shore-line of the Cul-de-Sac,[6]
When twilight furnishes a nook obscure.

Enter CHAMPLAIN.

CHAMPLAIN. Was't but the shadow of a zephyr'd branch,
The rustle of some premature decay
Of autumn's matron bloom? Yet here there is
Fair field for rendezvous of friend or foe—
Retreat for self-communing, as the breeze
Brings whisperings from the harbour's breath
Of expectation's secrets. One is ne'er alone

Digitized by Google

Where nature sighs her love-song in our hearing.
And here, within these glades that sentinel
This forest realm far unexplored, as seems
To me, France and Quebec do plight their troth,
While I stand witness to the prophecy.
A city founded is no city built,
Till faith becomes prolific by the fathering tale
Of good report and all-availing effort.
De Monts has seen Port Royal slow to thrive,
Yet falters not to further bold essay
For wealth to satiate his company with;
But I have seen Quebec, nature's *chef-d'oeuvre,*
And fain would colonize a commonwealth,
With it in midst, to peer the elder nations.
Flouting all hindrance from the greed of gain,
Madame de Guercheville still would have her *pères;*[7]
But, priests or parsons, far her wealth would go
To quicken my *qui vive* on what's to come
By way of permanence. And here I swear
Beneath the dome of this pure western sky—
God's temple altared by the Cape near by,
And else adorned by nature's fondest tints—
I solemn swear to sink all claims for wealth
My own, and fight, as best I may, for what
Is lasting in the fame of exploration
And in the care, that cozens no one's purse,
To plant the seeds of nationhood. I swear
To do't: and may the record of my oath
Haunt me to find it unfulfilled. But who
Comes here? Was't human shadow, after all,
I saw? 'Tis Jean Duval, the iron man
In more than smithy phrase. This fellow I
Do sore mistrust. His sullen, forge-stained face

Digitized by Google

Has fuel underneath its unwashed seams
To keep aglow for long a mutiny.
What brings you hither, my goodman? There is
No lingering in our work though I be here.
What would you have of me?

DUVAL. I have no claim
To be from duty, were my work belate.
My forge has need of stock, and I would scan
The channel from this vantage-ground to see
If comes the vessel with supplies afresh
From Tadousac.[8]

CHAMPLAIN. Since from the glade you come,
Perchance 'twas from some tree-top you have ta'en
Your poise to make observe.

DUVAL. Nay, not so high,
My monseigneur, but I have seen—

CHAMPLAIN. The barque
From Tadousac and France? Ha, does she come?

DUVAL. Ay, more than one—bark-built, though not all barques—[9]
A hundred, more or less, beplumed in green,
And freighted to the gunwale dangerously.

CHAMPLAIN. The Montagnais, no doubt,[10] returned to sue
For further counsel how to flush their foes
And make alliance with their Huron friends.
Then haste ye to the river's brink and say
That here in ample grove I them await,
Where they may else encampment amplify

Digitized by Google

Convenient to all parley. Pierre Chavin[11]
Knows what I would to give them countenance,
Until the *Habitation* has more
Than walls to make impress of welcoming.
The Master of the ship from Tadousac
May bring up-hill a moiety of tars
To make some state ado with fleur-de-lis
And uniform. Haste and away, nor linger.

[*Exit* DUVAL, *hastening from the grove, with an aside on his lips.*

DUVAL. Was ever chance so favouring to my trump?
'Tis his to vamp aloud: 'tis mine to win.

CHAMPLAIN. What fate-evolvements strange are in my hand,
Here on a continent of interests twain!
France, England, allied as a must or may,
With these the tribes of primal lusts and hate!
What quarrel have I with this swarthy ire,
Save trade's instincts to titillate the near,
And limit wide, as may, its vantage-ground?
These knaves approaching are but friends to me
Because they would make foe of me to theirs.
Service I'd make of them in exploration's cause,
Service of me they'd make for conquest's sake:
And thus ambition holds me poised in doubt
What rectitude of rule would have me do.
De Monts, Quebec, and France—my trinity of cares!
Algonquins, Hurons, Montagnais would make
Quebec their rallying-point; but whence
Comes mine, should conquest not mature for aye
And keep for France this best of trading coignes?

Digitized by Google

In times of colonizing, breeding hates
Are poor handmaidens. Build I would in peace,
Making my ramparts strong for after-foe,
If come he will to cauterize success.
I've proved my little harvests, God be praised;
And where the soil yields corn the plain breeds towns,
A commonwealth's up-building. Hark! they come,
These devil's love-chicks that are friends of mine!

Enter ANTOINE NATEL *with* CAPTAIN BLAIS.

NATEL. *Pardonne, monsieur,* 'twas Jean Duval that sent
Me hither, humble as a guide for Captain Blais,[12]
Who'd climb aforehand from the moorage bight
To greet you opportune.

[*Exit* NATEL.

CHAMPLAIN. Welcome, my Blais!
Good news, I trust, you bring, and fair despatch,
To give us cheer from Tadousac and France.
Strange hap it is to have you with us now,
While waiting advent of these crowding tribesmen.

CAPTAIN BLAIS. They're on their way, your blacksmith in advance,
Marshalling his motley line processional,
With objurgations hot as smithy glow—
Your men and mine on starboard or astern.
List to their chorus, halyard-timed, "Ho there,
My hearties, ho," reverberate from the distance.

Digitized by Google

Men and Sailors singing.

Haul the rope and hold it full,
Ho there, my hearties, ho!
Saving your breath for an honest pull,
Ya-ho, heigh-ho, ya-ho!

And save their breath perforce they will, before
The summit's overcome. While climb they must
Slow-paced, 'tis mine to seize the instant chance
To give curt tidings from the nether port,
And these writ messages from Pontgravé.[13]

CHAMPLAIN. He's well?

CAPT. BLAIS. Ay, well and busy, as his heart
Is fervent o'er De Monts' affairs and thine.

[CHAMPLAIN *scans one of the letters.*

CHAMPLAIN. This rivalry breeds mischief to our plans.
Monopoly is ours by charter-right,
Though dangered sore by Breton jealousy;
And here these villains' elbows angle sharp
Into our ribs, as if the market lot
For beaver skins was theirs as much as ours.
Had I full will of state, short shrift I'd mete
To every Basque and Malouin ghoul afloat,[14]
Who'd pretermit our prices, and sore havoc make
Of what the Company needs the most of all
To implement our purposes and hopes
Of state extension—compassing New France

Digitized by Google

Into a realm of more than name. But breath
For breath, my Blais: your men and mine enchoir
On nearer ground, with breath not yet outblown.

Men and Sailors singing.

The task is o'er, well done and full,
Ho there, my hearties, ho!
Saving your breath for one more pull,
Ya-ho, heigh-ho, ya-ho!

[CAPTAIN BLAIS *moves aside to reconnoitre.*

CAPT. BLAIS. That blacksmith blade, I trow, would chaos drag
In line to meet you here. Amid the din,
I hear his raucous voice a-hammering out
His red-hot oaths of mandate, as they spread
And simmer in the murmurings of the many.

CHAMPLAIN. These unconverted *ignorants*, perchance,
May knit my problem solvable. The trade
Is in their hands: their wars in mine, to make
Or mar. Friendship is thick as blood, at times,
Prolific mostly of advantage. Nay,
The interest born of self, be't love or war
Or trade, gives impulse to all enterprise.
And here, within these continental claims—
The confines of a realm explorable
Yet unexplored—'tis mine to cultivate
A friendship with these heathen near at hand—
To civilize, to Christianize, for trade
Results, or, better still, for conscience' sake.

Digitized by Google

Two worlds, my Blais, are seeking instant blend,
The white man's song ascendant.

Men and Sailors singing as they approach nearer.

Hey, ho, for the river, the glad, gladdening river,
The glory of ships and of men,
'Tis ever renewing a now and forever,
To piece out God's world again.

Refrain—
From the brooklet's fond glee to the far-swelling sea
Its glory's the song of the free.

CHAMPLAIN (*continuing*). I'd have them round me in the centre, Blais,
To give some show of state. The eye of man,
Savage or civilized, seeks root in pomp
To fashion its designs. Ah, here they are:
While yet they sing, give grouping, guiding hand.

Men and Sailors enter, singing.

Hey, ho, for the mountain, the soul-staying mountain,
So grand in its garment of green:
As guardian it stands o'er the glad river's fountain
Hid far in the valleys between.

Refrain—
From the brooklet's fond glee to the far-swelling sea,
Its glory's the song of the free.

Curtain. Tableau revealed. Indians grouped to the right and left of CHAMPLAIN, *who is surrounded by*

Digitized by Google

his own and CAPTAIN BLAIS' *men.* CAPTAIN BLAIS *and* PIERRE CHAVIN *on either side of* CHAMPLAIN. *The whole company singing in concert.*

Hey, ho, for the forest, the wealth-teeming forest,
'Tis ours to subdue and constrain:
The handmaid of nature, how amply thou storest
The tributes that life can sustain.

Refrain—
From the brooklet's fond glee to the far-swelling sea,
Thy glory's the realm of the free.

An Indian song and dance by the tribesmen.

CHAMPLAIN. Greeting I give in name of king and state,
To all our allies in this western world.
Though not in tongue or kin assimilate,
Brethren we'd be by welcome's fair exchange.
This land is ours reciprocate. 'Tis yours
By right of birth; 'tis ours by right of those
Who sent us hither, laden with the intent
Of peaceful trading and of permanent
Abode. My friend, brave Captain Blais,
From Tadousac arrives, to share with me
And mine the task of hospitality.
He has the means within his company
To safe mature our converse into line
With treaty-making for the general good.
I bid him call the interpreter to tell
You what I've said by way of common greeting.
To-morrow we will meet on board his ship

Digitized by Google

For entertainment and exchange of views.
Chavin, my right-hand counsellor and friend,
Will join with you, my bravest Captain Blais,
To entertain our guests with prelude talk,
Interpret over my return. Ho, you,
Natel, I'd have you me accompany
Down to the *Habitation*. In time,
I will return when I have studied these,
And you, Chavin, have studied those somewhat,
To gauge the measuring unit of our faith in them.

[*Exit* CHAMPLAIN, *as the whole company raise cheers in his honour, and sing a favourite French chorus while he disappears. The Indians also take up a chorus of their own, followed by dancing in Indian fashion.* JEAN DUVAL, *conspicuous in the revel, makes many asides to his fellow conspirators.*

CURTAIN.

ACT I. SCENE 2.

The Conspirators lurking on the shore of the Cul-de-Sac. The Habitation seen on the opposite side.

DUVAL. Well met, my comrades! Here we may commune
Within the dark of our intent, and in the light
Of what has happened—first great state event—
While yet Quebec is in its infancy.[15]

Digitized by Google

Quebec! Who'd make it aught but what it is,
Were we to fail to make it more for us?
Who is this Champlain, strutting, would-be lord,
To dominate our world both white and black?
He is our master, say you! Nay, but we are his,
Now that these savages have come to join
In making fame for us and not for him.
What say you, friend Natel, now you have been
With this and that, from *Habitation* to ship?
Naught have you seen to bid you change your mind?

NATEL. Naught added unto naught a nothing makes,
While you have sure a something to advise.
What are your plans, now you have brought us here?

DUVAL. My plans are yours and mine, sworn to by these.
We are but one in counsel o'er a deed undone:
What is the will of one is will of all.
Hand unto hand, we share and share alike,
Deed compassing and in its recompense:
All will be ours, when Champlain dies the death
I have prepared for him and Captain Blais.

NATEL. What is that death, and where and when and how?

DUVAL. Mark yonder light, beyond the garden wall,
Whither our great man seeks retreat from cares,
And courts the twilight air with thoughts of love,
Counting his petty sowings in their bloom,
To nature's music in the lap of tide:
That is the beacon of our enterprise:
There is the final rendezvous of fate

Digitized by Google

With us for him—he measuring out his plans
Ahead, we garnering ours in one fell swoop.

NATEL. Murder is't, then, Jean Duval, you'd do—
Cold-blooded murder for the sake of gain?
Have you—and you, and you—counted the cost,
And you, who oft have curdled us with tales
Of death and torture in Parisian dens?
Think you St. Lawrence is the muddy Seine,
Wherein to hide the crimson of a crime?
When striking down a foe, I would be safe,
Else might the stroke reprisal make
On mine own head, to mutilate a fool.

DUVAL. A fool, you say; nay, craven rather—perchance
Betrayer of our purpose! Hissing and hounds,
With hammer in my hand, reserved for others,
Perdition's demons snipping at my heels
To urge me on, I'd make a testing of your skull—

[DUVAL *rushes on* NATEL, *seizing him by the throat with his one hand, and threatening him with his hammer in the other.*

NATEL. Hold, villain! Seize him, friends!

[*The three other Conspirators, rushing to* NATEL'S *rescue, seize* DUVAL *struggling; and, plucking the hammer from his hand, hold him in firm restraint.*

DUVAL. Nay, check me not,
Till measure make I of the traitor's gall.

Digitized by Google

NATEL (*standing apart*). Constrain him while I speak. Ne'er deluge us
All over with the vapours of your smithy rage
Mistimed. You would be master premature.
We're here to join in counsel, not to jar,
Drawing the ears of others hitherward,
Before we wist what you would have us do.

ONE OF THE CONSPIR. Ay, that is in the train of sense.

THE OTHER CONSPIR. As so say we.

NATEL. There, now you have the major vote, Duval,
Binding us still to further your designs
Unto the death. We are no jostling fools,
Trading for war, or smirking in our paint
And feathers, whether we understand or not:
We are from France, no drolls of woodland spawn.
Then out with what you'd have us do, and lead
Us to the edge of circumstance to-night
Or when the time is ripe.

DUVAL (*released*). Draw hither then,
While this my temper's stayed—the mischief of it.
These Montagnais the brunt must bear for us.
They're yonder up the hill, in council met,
Preparing for the morrow's grand pow-wow,
On and around the ship; nor till the dusk
Of evening will they homewards. Then may we,
Disguised as they, a seeming lingering remnant,
Secrete ourselves within the garden nooks,
And bide our chance to rush upon our victim.
This hammer here is sure as David's stone,
My arm, its sling, as silent, making aim.

Digitized by Google

Your share is but an after-part to play,
While circumventing Blais on board his ship,
To counterpart on him our blow—while daring fate
To treaty with Chavin for rule supreme
Within the *Habitation.*

NATEL. Methinks
The after-part is more severe a task
Than is the murderous prelude to the ploy.
There, now, your anger hold in leash of will!
Surely a jest has permit from a friend.
The means are yours, no doubt, to crown success,
And ere we part, 'twere well to make rehearsal.
The soldier's foresight is a fell romance,
When he neglects all back-door right of way,
As vanguard zeal leaps on to victory.
Therefore, while thieflike silence girds the bay,
Let us adjourn where runs the garden line,
To share review with you and espionage,
Foot unto foot and eye to eye alert,
Ev'n to the cautions for alarmed retreat.

DUVAL. Retreat, alarm, and palpitation's dread—
Goose-step apace, with cowl close overdrawn!
Sin save us, while this posing is afoot,
And keep the tinkered bottom of our hearts
From falling out! As brats of Mars, forsooth,
In swaddlings, is the rôle for us to play,
Ev'n to the cautions for alarmed retreat.
Owl-eyed Antoine, see how the glimmering light
From Champlain's chamber winks itself abed!
Therefore to us, poor timid mice awake,
Reveal how best you'd plan to bell the cat—[16]

Digitized by Google

Perchance with tape-line measuring inch by inch
The avenues of our activity,
Ev'n to the cautions for alarmed retreat!
Come, fellows, follow; I am on my guard:
Be you on yours, while Antoine here makes sure,
Ev'n to the cautions for alarmed retreat.

NATEL. Your rage and satire are but impish twins
Which claim their father in your hardihood:
They run fell comrades in a common leash,
While yet their game is in its lair, with ear
On edge to outer sounds. So will I move
Ahead and wait you yonder, where the tide
Makes garden water-mark.

DUVAL. Alarmed again!
The flittering of such fluttering hearts *à bas!*
'Tis well his oath is not forestalled, or ev'n
On the threshold of our deed he'd turn
To run away. An if he would? Ha, 'ha!
Then would there be a shedding thrice of blood
Providing comradeship for souls in flight.

CONSPIR. This matching may produce a fire, Duval,
To send us all to kingdom come ablaze,
Ere yet the deed be done. Were it not well
To speak him fair—

SECOND CONSPIR. And give him easier rope
To work his fashion out as best he would,
As so would we, more subject to your will.

THE THREE CONSPIR. So say we all united in the splore.

Digitized by Google

DUVAL. You're right, my lads, and I am wrong,
more fool.
Then haste we as we may, to join his measuring mood,
Ev'n to the cautions for alarmed retreat
For him, though not for us full purpose-charged.

[*Exeunt the Three Conspirators.*

Instant for action when the morrow's eve
Brings chance and darkness to my single arm:
There's no Natel, in all this world of blight,
To stay the blow that's death to him I hate.

Exit DUVAL *and enter* PIERRE CHAVIN.

CHAVIN. Voices these were for certain that I heard—
From Captain Blais, methought, and boatswain help,
Bringing the supercargo's ship-details,
Which he would have full checked ere morning comes.
These loudsome visitors encamped above
Will hardly brook neglect the livelong day,
And ship-unloading must be done betimes,
Whate'er betides. Ha, there he comes, for sure,
Unless the lap of oar deceives the ear
As did these voices that methought I heard.

Enter NATEL, *in lurking fashion.*

NATEL. Monsieur Chavin, I would a word with you.

CHAVIN (*startled*). Antoine Natel! Then voices
'twas I heard.
Where are the others?

NATEL. Ah, *monsieur,* gone they are,
To seek the previous charm of wickedness,
Near by the master's yonder garden wall.

Digitized by Google

CHAVIN. Speak out, nor thus enigma and alarm
Stir in my ear, intent on seaward sounds
And Captain Blais' approach. What is't you mean?
Who are these others you'd make mystery of?
Have they unlawful promptings 'gainst Champlain?

NATEL. Alas! they have, and I would tell you all.

CHAVIN. All! And what? To Captain Blais as well?
Ho, here he comes, his keel abreast the shore!
Care you to speak before him, as to me?
Or is your secret but surmise the place
Would smell to laughing-point, were it o'er-hatched?
Come on, and let us hail him!

NATEL (*with trepidation*). Hail him not,
Unless you'd have Duval return hot haste,
From lurking round the *Habitation,*
To stay my tale.

CHAVIN. What! Is it Jean Duval,
That sulphur-tempered jack-trap, beldame-born,
Suckled of ire, of whom you have to tell?
Then Blais must hear your tale, assuring us
A friend as witness, and the master's friend.
So come your ways and make a breast of it,
With no Duval from Hades threatening you.

[CHAVIN *hereupon takes* NATEL *by the arm and leads him off the stage.*

Digitized by Google

ACT I. SCENE 3.

CHAMPLAIN, CAPTAIN BLAIS, *and* PIERRE CHAVIN *discovered on board the Company's ship, early in the morning, while the crew is below for breakfast, antecedent to the discharging of the cargo. The three are seen conversing near the after-deck.*

CHAMPLAIN. The men know nought of what's afoot, nor need
Be told, till time is ripe for apprehending blow.
Chavin has told me all at wake of dawn,
And not a whisper permeates the air,
Nor should escape us, being most concerned.
Antoine Natel fears Jean Duval's right arm,
As well may both of them the law's avenge.
Call forth your sailor lads, that I may speak
A word, to mask the event in embryo,
Till nip we safe this bud of mutiny.
Omens of ill are not ingraft with harm
To those who boldly interrupt the ingrate
In deeds of violence. There is a law
That measures justice out for man's remede,
And I myself must hold the measuring staff
Expert and sure, in such a case as this.
Unorganized as yet, we have no justice-court,[17]
Wherein to try *de jure* miscreants,
Nor even prison-house, beyond your ship.
All we can do is bind them hand and foot,
And send them with you, back to Tadousac,
Where counsel I may take with Pontgravé.

Digitized by Google

CAPT. BLAIS. While yet these natives are a-buzzing - round?

CHAMPLAIN. Leave these to me and the interpreter.
Chavin will guard the *Habitation;*
While you deplete your cargo and select
The men to seize the culprits unalarmed.
The woods are mine from which to drive the gnats:
Yours is the ship to environ as a trap:
The citadel my brave Chavin will hold.[18]

CHAVIN. Let all and sundry, say I, welcome have,
So that the would-be stay-aways may know
Their disaffection will be self-betrayed.

CHAMPLAIN. Well said, Chavin, give folly further chance
To masquerade apace with blinded eyes,
Until reprisal comes self-justified.
The ignorant as seldom fail to side
With fairplay's cause as do the wisdom-struck;
And we must hold the bridle lines discreet,
To keep in rein the major part. So, then,
Call all on deck, that I may prelude make
Of herding guilt within high festival,
Until the arm of justice times its blow.

CAPT. BLAIS. The arrest will hardly lack for witnesses.

CHAMPLAIN. The more the better for our purposed aim,
To blight the seeds of discontent. Chavin
Has bid us well: let all and sundry come.

Digitized by Google

CAPT. BLAIS. Landsman and salt, with tribesmen fringing round,
Motley in garb, in etiquette diverse,
Will need a supervision wisdomed well,
To blend in festal comradeship. Let's hope
No chance dessert will be a dish of blood,
To rouse the passions of their unkempt souls.

CHAMPLAIN. Yet, blood or none, the venture must be made.
Pipe up the men, and bid them hear me speak
How meed awaits them in the afternoon,
When once the cargo has been shipped ashore.

[*The Sailors are piped on deck.*

CAPT. BLAIS. Ho there! this way to hear the master speak!
Give him a rousing cheer, and then be silent.

[*Cheering from the Sailors.*

SONG AND CHORUS.

Hail to Old France, whence comes the pioneer,
To sow the seeds of industry and skill;
Vive le roi who sends his subjects here,
To unfurl the flag of France on every hill.
Up, then, with cap in hand,
Raise we our *vivats* famed in song,
Vive le roi!
Up, then, in sight of land,
Raise we our *vivats* long and strong,
Vive le gouverneur!

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN. Well sung, my lads, and opportune in theme!
And I would have you make reserve of such
And more, when once unloading toil is done,
And rest comes sweetest at the set of sun.

[*Cheering from the Sailors.*

Visitors we have on shore who bid adieu
To you and me to-day; and I would send
Them on their way back to their forest homes,
Embued with due respect for whom we serve,
Our king and fatherland. Repeat that song
For them: vibrate the rigging as you may
With Samson sport void of all feigning hate,
And I will have no one absent himself
As sharer in your mirth or looker-on.

[*Cheering from the Sailors, who again sing.*

Up, then, with cap in hand,
Raise we our *vivats* famed in song,
Vive le roi!
Up, then, in sight of land,
Raise we our *vivats* long and strong,
Vive le gouverneur!

Merci, my lads, your hearts are well in place,
And, hap what will, your loyalty I'll hold
An unalloyed reserve. The enterprise,
The king has undertaken here, demands
Repression of self-will and false design;
And I, for one, must do the warding off

Digitized by Google

From here to Tadousac, with Captain Blais
And brave Chavin—and you—to stand by me.

[*More cheering from the Sailors.*

I leave you in the hands of Captain Blais
To crown aglee the *fête* of your deserving,
With what replenishment of stores are ours.
Bien revoir to all of you, my friends:
I hie me to the Stadacona woods,
To meet these natives fair. Interpreter!
I would you bear me company forthwith.

[*Cheers and chorus.*

Up, then, with cap in hand,
Raise we our *vivats* famed in song,
Vive le roi!
Up, then, in sight of land,
Raise we our *vivats* long and strong,
Vive le gouverneur!

Digitized by Google

ACT I. SCENE 4.

The Company's ship with decks cleared. The rigging adorned with flags and bannerets. A dais has been raised amidship for CHAMPLAIN, CAPTAIN BLAIS, PIERRE CHAVIN, *the Interpreter, the Chief of the Montagnais, and the sub-officers of the vessel. Sailors and colonists, in holiday attire, are seen fraternizing with the Indians, as far as the language of signs permits; and, as they throng everywhere, on the poop, in the shrouds, or on the main deck,* JEAN DUVAL *and his fellow conspirators prominently share in the festival.* ANTOINE NATEL *is seen keeping somewhat in the background, near a group of sailors, to the right of the dais. When the curtain rises, the feasting is supposed to be over, the whole company being on the point of singing another verse of "Vive le gouverneur."*

Hail to New France, where comes the pioneer,
To plant his expectations far and wide:
Hail to Quebec, whose birth has crowned the year,
Amid the woodlands near the river's side.
Up, then, with cap in hand,
Raise we our *vivats* famed in song,
Vive le roi!
Up, then, in sight of land,
Raise we our *vivats* long and strong,
Vive le gouverneur!

The Indians follow with a chorus of their own.

Thereafter DUVAL *sings.*

Digitized by Google

THE BLACKSMITH'S SONG.

I am a blacksmith bold,
As was Tubal-Cain of old,
In smithy all aglow,
Night and morning:
Cling, clang, my hammer goes,
Ringing merrily its blows,
On the hot iron, fast and slow,
Ever turning.

Chorus—

Hand and hammer, anvil clamour
Of the smithy's chastened charms:
Flash the showers of gold and glamour
By the blacksmith's brawny arms.

What trade is like to mine,
Though the sun's forbid to shine
By the clouds beyond my door,
Late or early:
My hammer maketh song
On the anvil, loud and strong,
As the light and heat outpour
Bright and merrily.

Chorus—

Hand and hammer, anvil clamour
Of the smithy's chastened charms:
Shed the star-showers 'mid the glamour,
By the blacksmith's brawny arms.

As the song ceases, the Mate of the Vessel calls out:

Ho there, my lads, the villain seize amain!

Digitized by Google

Each to his charge; the others take by force,
And drag them thither, where the governor sits!

[*Great commotion and resistance on the part of* JEAN DUVAL *and the three Conspirators.* ANTOINE NATEL *is led forth by the Sailors near him.*

CHAVIN. Antoine Natel, 'tis now your time to speak,
In presence of your masters, what you know
Of this Duval—this devil's own, and these
His henchermen in crime.

DUVAL (*struggling with his captors*). Antoine Natel,
Give heed to none of them. Queried we speak;
But, otherwise, I do disclaim beforehand
The cursèd hound who curves his lolling tongue,
Dripping accusingly with venom's spit,
Against my character.

CHAMPLAIN. Speak out, Natel,
If you have aught to say!

NATEL. There's naught, monsieur,
For me to say, beyond what else these know.

CHAMPLAIN. And what is that?

DUVAL. Antoine Natel, beware!
Hate as you may, you need not hang yourself.

CHAMPLAIN. Silence, Duval! Your rage in time will foam.
Antoine Natel, does Captain Blais know all
You have to witness in this strange exploit?

Digitized by Google

NATEL. From what has happed, some one knows more than much,
To place us thus in urgent jeopardy.

CAPT. BLAIS. Do you recant or re-confess?

NATEL. Were there
But two about, methinks, I'd re-confess.

DUVAL. You would, you chicken-heart! Then would I twist
Your neck as I would fire-untempered tube,
And feet you towards the seigneur mightiness
Of this our so-called master of Quebec.
Craving your pardon, noble monseigneur,
This rat Natel is but a timid beast,
And, ever nibbling, cons his retro-acts
As sentry cautions for alarmed retreat.
Enhance I not your temper, dear Antoine,
In speaking thus of you? Beware, I say:
Bite off no more your gullet may engorge:
To say what's opportune, speak not at all.

CHAMPLAIN. Counsel comes quickened, when the adviser tests
Its gifts upon himself. Condemned you are,
From words your own and boldness out of place.
Bind him secure, nor let the others go:
All must be tried for treason.

DUVAL. Treason to whom?
Not to the king, since he's not here; nor yet
To Canada, our land as much as yours;
Nor to your childish ecstasy of rule.

Digitized by Google

If this white-livered minion has betrayed
Aught but his own timidity, I'll tar
His liver black with stagnant blood, and tear
The heart of him asunder, valve to valve,
And throw it dripping in the face of justice.

CHAMPLAIN. Remove him, lads, for fetters full secured.
We've frightened off the natives to their home.
In duty such as this there is no fear
For us. To Tadousac the five must go,
There to be tried by Pontgravé. For me,
I'll take them thither—

DUVAL (*being dragged off*). You? To Tadousac?
To France—perchance to hell! What wots it now?
Give me but clutch of that Antoine Natel,
And all the Champlains on the hemisphere
Would not prevent my vengeance drawing blood.

CURTAIN.

ACT I. SCENE 5.

A room in the Habitation. CHAMPLAIN *and* PONTGRAVÉ *seated on either side of a table.*

CHAMPLAIN. No counsel hath from me more of respect
Than yours, my Pontgravé. There was no call
For me to tarry long at Tadousac,
When once you verdict gave to hold our court

Digitized by Google

Where this strange mutiny had hatching ground.
You have the miscreants in your keep; while I,
Returning in hot haste ahead of you,
Have made redress for loss of building time.

PONTGRAVÉ. Alas! 'tis ever building time for you
And me, with fools at hand to undermine
The foundings of our expectations, urged
By honest toil. *Implore, explore, deplore*
Make up a *gamme de trois,*[19] evolving aye
A tune that has no chink of gold for us.
Chauvin, De Monts, and I—and then De Chaste,
When died Chauvin,[20] for him to die in turn—
A rule of three to solve the mysteries
Of western life for eastern maintenance—
Have left the terms the same for you and me,
With no inflow of nuggets yet for us.

CHAMPLAIN. You would be rich too soon for after-fame.

PONTGRAVÉ. I would have salvage for the wound I had
From foul Darache's treacherous pistol-shot,[21]
Which breeds within me still rheumatic pains
And old age coming on.

CHAMPLAIN. Fie on you there,
Tough-salted son of Neptune, weather-proof!
De Monts has no more brawny servitor,
To dare for him the tide of enterprise,
To stand by me amid these hopes of ours.

PONTGRAVÉ. Hopes come and go, as, of Acadian birth,
They settled once upon the dovecot built

Digitized by Google

By Poutrincourt[22] and you, only to take
Their flight far up the river here, to flit
Again where yet *le bon Dieu* only knows.

CHAMPLAIN. Ah, that was but a prelude to the ken
Of where our fortunes lay remote from foes.
Port Royal, racked with priest-and-parson strife,[23]
And pit-a-pat from Indian *entourage*
And Boston threats, betrayed its infancy,
Leaving your *gamme de trois* yet in our hands—
De Monts' and yours and mine—to harmonize
The song of hope with undernotes of faith.
You have no fear, nor I, of what's to come,
Nathless the folly of this Jean Duval.

PONTGRAVÉ. Let Jean Duval be hanged, as others of his kind,
Though all in time when judged by his compeers!
What recks a head or two in kingship's games?
Yourself and I have roamed the seas for long
In search for prestige territorial
And peltry profits: you are now in touch
With sway viceregal; I, a pilot poor,
With but one wholesome leg to stand upon.
What would you have to reassure your reign?

CHAMPLAIN. You for my second, first as last assured—
First in command of yore and still my friend,
Brave and unjealous, true as steel in grain!
The charter of De Monts has but a year
To run; and, end or mend, 'tis mine to build
Some semblance of a fixèd town abode,
Which after-charters may not overlook

Digitized by Google

A factor of their terms. Here we remain,
The twain of us, a life-work in our hand,
Perchance to bear the toss of angrier seas
Than those we've braved from Father Neptune's ire—
Perchance to see the wreckage of our toils,
To hear the hissing of our foes' outcries,
The wailings o'er a loss of trade returns,
Or kingship's recompense; but ne'er to die
From self-betrayal, though it be from want.
Come weal or wailing, here our task is set,
Say I, as God doth recommend.

PONTGRAVÉ. Nor shame
For me to follow such a leader, grained
In goodness, fitting fore-robe for a king.
There's wealth in this vast continent
To make of commonwealths a score or more.
A king, though poor, is still a king in kind;
And poorer though his vizier be, yet I
Your second still would be, were not a *sous*
To drop into my scrip for many a year,
Still gold is gold, and I would have of it,
Defying age and this defective limb
That twinges older ev'ry day, since e'er
Derage's aiming ire made mark of it.
Would that we had him here to masthead him
With hempen kerchief, as we're like to do
To these rapscallion sons of mutiny.

CHAMP. There is a prompting in my heart to grant
Remission—

PONTGRAVÉ. What! caress a serpent's curves?
Better it were to abrogate at once,

Digitized by Google

Or place in pawn your coming commonwealth
To every scoundrel, white or black or brown,
Who comes to give you courtesy, and makes
A kicking footstool of the twain of us.

CHAMPLAIN. I would, of course, there should be judgment given.

PONTGRAVÉ. And meted punishment, as I would say,
Candid and condign, as a crime-restraint
In this new realm of ours. The court you hold
Will have no legal awe from wig or gown;
But, none the less, the verdict men must hold
As neither play, nor vengeance preconceived,
Nor shorn of state-like dignity acclaimed.

CHAMPLAIN. So would I have it, as Chavin's been told,
Since yesternight, making announcement meet
To all the workmen round the Cul-de-Sac
And Storehouse Point,[24] to witness every act
In presence of your sailor lads, and even
Whate'er of tribesmen there may congregate.
The king's prestige and ours must be upheld
As that on which all else must bear effect.
Remain: I go to see what has been done
To implement my pre-commands.

[*Exit* CHAMPLAIN.

PONTGRAVÉ. Champlain!
That is a name posterity may praise
From river's mouth to where it has its source,
Or I be much mistaken. Born a king
Without a kingdom, a kingdom he has found.
Beset with dangers manifold, he maketh pause,

Digitized by Google

Only to overcome them one by one.
I would I had his constancy and tact
In making good a purpose. Alas! to me
This founding of a France the New out here
Has gone askew, since e'er I homeward sailed
With my first freight of furs. Ah, how they hailed
My thrifty find! How promised they to me
The husbandry of ampler means, to vie
With Spain and England, in these western wilds—
These wilds, indeed, that sered Jacques Cartier's hopes
And Roberval's renown, bringing to shame
Poor De la Roche, Noel and all the rest.[25]
And now they play me poor as Jean Baptiste.
But Champlain! Ah, far other, he's a king.
In hell I'd have some hope, were he but near
To cherish me, to christen me each day
With patience. Nought can sour these great, dark eyes,
From joining with the sun in making day of night,
Or thawing out a winter's woe at Tadousac.
This Jean Duval must be full Satan-born,
To seek, for hate, the end of such as he.
No knight around Port Royal's festal board
Gave joy a gentler impulse, in the days
When merry Marc Lescarbot ruled the roast[26]
Or poured the wine: no heart so stout as his
When famine stalked us to the verge of death.
Nay, dear old France hath few his peers, in times
Of peace or joy, of danger or distraint;
And, if his plans mature, as chance they may,
The centuries will carry down his fame,
The father of a western fatherland.

Digitized by Google

ACT I. SCENE 6.

The vessel's deck arranged as a tribunal, with awning overhead and a dais erected on the quarterdeck. CHAMPLAIN *and* PONTGRAVÉ *seated together as the supreme officials of the colony.* PIERRE CHAVIN *acts as clerk of the improvised court of justice.* CAPTAIN BLAIS *takes the place of prosecutor, the ship's doctor acts for the defence, and one of the ship's mates as foreman of the jury. Sailors, pioneers and Indians in the foreground, with solemnity on every face.*

PONTGRAVÉ. Before this solemn-purposed court proceeds,
I would a word to emphasize decree.
The folly of wrath and hate was at its poise,
When what is law—authority acclaimed—
Put forth its hand, to quench the deed devised.
Here sits our governor—God grant him health—
And here stand I to vindicate his rule,
Defiance bidding to the secrecies of crime,
And all who join its brotherhood of guilt.
Necessity is the birth-mark of the law,
Created and apprised of God and man;
And hence this court, tribunal of the state,
Apprised of God, has warrant for its acts,
In sight of heaven and France. Forget me, then,
As mariner, and give me heed as judge,
Doing aright as this sworn jury bid.
The doctor here stands for the prisoners' rights,
While query for the truth is made by all.
Hence, God be with us all, for justice' sake.

Digitized by Google

CAPT. BLAIS. Natel hath made confession.

PONTGRAVÉ. Call him up.

THE DOCTOR. King's evidence is set the privilege
Of ransom, when 'tis penitence that pleads.

PONTGRAVÉ. And, use-and-wont, the court sustains the claim.
Bring forth the prisoners!

THE DOCTOR. All of them?

PONTGRAVÉ. Nay, not Duval as yet. The tempest's lee
Aligns the ship's procedure, and becalms
A sailor's nerves whilst closing with the wind.
Duval's a tempest Æolus himself would fear.

THE DOCTOR. The other three?

PONTGRAVÉ. I care not as to them.

[*All the prisoners are brought on the stage save* JEAN DUVAL.

PONTGRAVÉ. Antoine Natel, free words are yours to plead,
In condemnation of your fellows there.
Your privilege due leniency should show
In accusation, as this court intends
While weighing justly. Speak as under oath,
Vouchsafed protection from your governor,
Who ruleth here as rules the king in France,

Digitized by Google

With death for treason in his regal gift.
These twelve, your fellow-men, will hear your tale,
To sift and harvest what is true in it.

CHAMPLAIN. I would a word to these, to recommend
Our action solemnly matured, and stained
With no fell bias of revenge. Quebec
Thus soon brings hope to us of growing times.
Through disaffection's blight, the seed—though sown
With forethought-skill and watered well with zeal—
Will linger in its rot this side the harvest.
The common cause of bearing well forbids
A pruning punitive. Therefore, of need,
When penitence holds out its pleading hand,
To stay the raid of pruning-knife, 'tis meet
That there be sparing by the pruner's hand.
Here in our colony we are but few,
Here in our colony there is work to do.
Duties co-ordinate, with no mistrust
Between, our present enterprise demands.
All law hath credence from our wisdom-tooth
And favour from our eye, which mitigates
Its purpose 'gainst the one for others' good,
Fulfilling what the state needs paramount.

THE DOCTOR. To stay all perturbation and delay,
I have in keeping this attest to read,
Which savours of confession.

PONTGRAVÉ. From Natel?

THE DOCTOR. Yea, signed by him in due and proper form.

Digitized by Google

PONTGRAVÉ. 'Tis well; proceed, and expedite the event
Of Jean Duval's retention in attaint.

The Doctor reads.

By name Antoine Natel, I solemn swear
Myself addict to turpitude of late,
In that, with others, I devised the death
Of him, my master, ruling for the king—
Offending doubly as a foul ingrate and fool,
Against the law and one deserving high.
I would commend me to your clemency
With due repentance for my guiltiness
In worming leadership, from greed of gain.

PONTGRAVÉ. This ends the case, if your accomplices
Accept and kiss the rod of this indictment.
These are your words free and subscript, Natel?

NATEL. They are.

PONTGRAVÉ. And you, ye others, what say you?
Call in Duval and count a full consent.
What! speak you not? Is your ingratitude
Too heavy for your eyebrows to sustain—
Your hearts too sluggish to contemn your shame?
Ah, here's Duval.

Enter DUVAL *with two Sailors on either side of him.*

Re-read what says Natel,
And let the rest of them keep nothing back
Of what they know corroborate of the plot
To kill their governor.

Digitized by Google

DUVAL (*to the other three Conspirators*). Has he confessed?

THE CONSPIRATORS. He has.

DUVAL. Then may I listen to his words
As you have done.

[*The Doctor re-reads* NATEL'S *confession, the passion of murderous hatred gleaming all the while from* DUVAL'S *face.*

PONTGRAVÉ. How now, Jean Duval,
Are you content to muster with your friends?

DUVAL. And you? I pray you tell me who's my friend
In this grotesque array of fence for nought?
Is this a court of justice or a farce?
A son of France, I claim my trial rights
Where justice robes itself in realty,
And has the sanction of the king of France.

PONTGRAVÉ. We have discussed all that, and what we want
Is your confession synchronous with this.

DUVAL (*hissing with rage*). Confession have from me in terms as these!
Think you I sprang from mongrel kin or tribe
As did this poor Natel, the slime of frog
And speckled spawn of mushroom parentage?

PONTGRAVÉ. There is no clemency for words like these.

Digitized by Google

DUVAL. I claim the right to speak whatever way
Is mine,—perchance to act, should you reject
The plea I have advanced in my behalf,
Under the ample folds of France's flag.

PONTGRAVÉ. A nation's flag is oft invoked amiss
To ward off doom. Do you confess your crime?

DUVAL. Confess, confess, and evermore confess—
Now that this coward's sprung false-bottomed leak,
To send himself to hell confessing still.
To France you will not take me? Say you, no?
Then, if with him I must, the way is long,
And I may surely curse you all farewell.
Hinder me not: my breath will just suffice
To give you fitting *congé* as I may.

PONTGRAVÉ. Take the vile miscreant to his cell again,
That business may proceed to reach its end.

DUVAL. My cell again! Nay, farther still than that,
And I must have companionship. Ah, ha!
Shed from my strength, you chips; and you, my lads,
Make what you can of circumstance, nor mourn
Antoine Natel unsouled. Scope for my arm,
You fools! Dare you to check my run-a-muck?
You're not Natel's or Champlain's sponsors. Ah,
Bacterian spawn, I have you at my stroke at last:
Take that and that and that, you lees a-rot,
A triple exit for your toadish blood!

[*Great commotion and a hastening towards* DUVAL, *who escapes to the bulwarks, and from them utters further defiance.*

Digitized by Google

Hold back, or more may join me Hadesward.
Ha, ha, Champlain, you trader's gilded tag,
With prick of knife receive my benediction,
Should aim direct aright my strength of cast.

[*Throwing his blood-stained dirk at* CHAMPLAIN'S *head,* DUVAL *finally leaps from the bulwarks of the ship into the river.*

PONTGRAVÉ. After him, six of you! he can't escape.
Remove the others! As for poor Natel—
What say you, doctor, is he really dead?

THE DOCTOR. Alas! no man can live for very long
Whose heart is cut in two. He's dying sure.

CHAMPLAIN. There is no dallying for such crime as this,
Degenerate beyond all state control.
Insane, inhuman, to the nuisance point.
The verdict first, and then the punishment.

PONTGRAVÉ. What say the jury? Are you all agreed?

THE FOREMAN. Of treason guilty all, of murder one.

PONTGRAVÉ. Then do I now condemn the one to be
Suspended by the neck until he's dead,
His head thereafter to be severed quite,
And placed upon a point of wide observe,
As caution to offenders of the law.
The others may be ta'en to France, as this
Our master should decide.

CHAMPLAIN. This is a day
To be remembered for right rule assured.

Digitized by Google

And, when this turmoil's over, we may keep
Our hearts in place to prosecute the work
Of building, with the air thus shed of crime.
Perforce in face of Pontgravé's decree.
This court is now dismissed to witness all
The culprit's capture and his just despatch.

[*A noise of altercation from the shore of the river. All run to the side of the vessel, to witness* DUVAL'S *final capture.*

Ah, they have caught him, raging still,
Nor cooled by his immersion. Pontgravé,
I leave you to his taking off. My eyes
Will hardly stand the strain. Besides, for me,
There's work of more import, now justice clears
Our atmosphere for conjoint industry,
While daylight lasts, and morrow brings its tasks.
So *au revoir* to all. My Pontgravé,
You'll find me at the *Habitation.*

Digitized by Google

ACT II. SCENE 1.

Paris. The garden attached to the residence of M. NICHOLAS BOULLÉ, *Secretary of the King's Chamber.* BOULLÉ *and* CHAMPLAIN *in conversation.*

BOULLÉ.[1] This founding of a colony has its charms,
Though yet it shows few subjects civilized.
From patron unto patron, change on change,
You seem to have a fleeting heritage.
With travellings up and down the forest glades,
Fighting the battles of your dusky friends,
Exploring and pow-wowing, making trust a doubt,
Your life's a strange unrest of problem work
That hath but little solving.

CHAMPLAIN. What of that,
As long as sweet Helène me welcome gives,
And you, her parents, guarantee your smiles
To me, a roving suitor, always turning up?
To roam and ruminate on what must come
At last is no betrayal of the faith
I have, that what is wisely sown must bear.

BOULLÉ. Your faith as yet bestows lean dividends,
With competition blowing angular,

Digitized by Google

And peltries selling downward every day.
Monopoly should be monopoly,
And not the veering weather-vane it is,
With trading greed and courtier-craft a-neck
To make a pitch-and-toss of enterprise,
And wreckage of a poor man's recompense.
But croaking ne'er disarmed catastrophe,
And I am glad to see you buoyant still.
Your *Habitation?*—

CHAMPLAIN. Ah, that is built
And ready for domestic winterings;
And, with the fort for its security,
Quebec will soon be—more than Indian name—
The country's *entrepôt* and capital.
Were you to see my rose-trees all in bloom,
Or winnow in your hands my heads of grain;
Were you to breathe the blend of purities
That zephyr woodland isle and sea-green river,
From near the *sentiers* of my hale *parterres,*
And watch the fringing clouds bedrape
Cape Diamond and the Cul-de-Sac;
Or, climbing to some higher vantage-ground,
Were you to count the grouping plains and girding hills,
And estimate them all a reaming storehouse, full
Of health and forest wealth for those to come,
Your scrip would swell, as does my prophecy, with hope
That, soon or late, New France will take its place
Among the realms of this wealth-bearing earth.

BOULLÉ. Ah, yes, Eustache has brought us goodly news

Digitized by Google

Of what the country has in unkempt store,
In spite of all its snow and ice. But here
Comes one to doubt you, as a mother may,
Who seeks to rob us of our pet ewe lamb.

Enter MADAME BOULLÉ *from the house.*

MADAME BOULLÉ. Is it concerns of state you two discuss
Out here beyond eavesdropping? Verily,
We women folks are held in simple fee
When men have bargaining aside on hand.

CHAMPLAIN. Nay, scold us not, for overhear you may
Without offence.

BOULLÉ. He says Quebec uplifts
Her head as proud as this poor Paris does;
But he is governor, you know, and chance
May praise beyond consent.

CHAMPLAIN. What *monsieur* means
Is, all is well to fill Helène with joy,
When she gets there. Ah, here the gipsy comes,
Tripping as comely as she'll walk a queen
Within her realm and mine beyond the seas!
Who would not win a crown, were't his to win for her,
Not mine, who only rover am at best?

HELÈNE BOULLÉ *approaches the group.*

My dainty one, the years go very slow,

Digitized by Google

Though you have grown apace. But I would have
You mine at running pace, to home you at Quebec,
Where you may join the sun in making growth
And happiness for all.

HELÈNE. Why not stay here,
And join the sun to play with all of us?

BOULLÉ. Ay, there's a poser for your problem-top,
That would be worth your while to saunter round.

CHAMPLAIN. But, dear Helène, there's work for me to do,
And you would hardly wed a lazybones,
Who lolls around the gaieties for long,
To be a burden to his friends and foes.

HELÈNE. A lazybones may love his wife!

BOULLÉ. By Jove,
She has him there, right on his burning cheek.

CHAMPLAIN. The birds have nests to build, *ma chère petite,*
And I am building one for you a-west,
Where you may sing for me the livelong day,
And prize your nestling with the setting sun.

MADAME B. How goes this western nestling nest of yours?

BOULLÉ. A few more sticks and straws and down, retained

Digitized by Google

From our poor dividends, will surely make
A *chateau* of the thing, as needs must be,
For princely entertainment and *éclat*.

MADAME B. When men defy the truth they satirize,
And I must shun all tidings second-hand
From Paris, now Quebec is home with us.
Champlain can tell me what I want to know,
Beyond all filling in from courtier's jeer,
Who worries over *sous* per *sous*, yet scoffs
Away his hopes deferred of coming gain.
I am a mother, not a satirist,
And hence would learn, to ease a mother's heart,
How goes this western nestling nest of his.

BOULLÉ. You see how times will change, my boy,
When this sweet birdie shares your western nest.
Come, sweet; your mother would a-courting go
By proxy; she has speech with your betrothed.

HELÈNE. But I am fain to watch them coo for me,
And find about Quebec, my home to be.

BOULLÉ. You would, my lass—to be chief mate in time?
I kiss adieu, then, to you all. Champlain,
My man, you're in for't now! Checkmate's the game:
A queen to gain, whatever pawns you lose
In explanation. *Au revoir, mes chères!*

[*Exit* M. BOULLÉ.

Digitized by Google

[CHAMPLAIN *spreads out on the table two plans, one of them of the Habitation, and the other of the environs of Quebec. While* CHAMPLAIN *and* HELÈNE *entertain each other over the one,* MADAME BOULLÉ *interests herself with the other, though not exclusively.*

HELÈNE. Ah, mother, this is what I want to see—
The nest, its very whereabouts and plan.
Where are our rooms to be? What, right in front,
With cannon all around? And galleries, too?
And dovecot in the inner court? It looks
A nest worth having, three in one attached.

CHAMPLAIN. And all for you, *ma chère.*

HELÈNE Give me your hand,
And let us wander from the river's shore,
You pointing with your finger, as we pass
From garden to the outer court, and thence
Within, from jetty path—ah, there it is—
To where the magazine—yes, that is it—
And smithy, too, and where the workmen live,
So plainly marked, with chimneys all a-smoke!
What think you of this western nestling nest,
Mamma? A wonder, is it not—complete,
Compact and quaint, and fitting for the times,
Though not resplendent as a *chateau* yet?

MADAME B. Romance can make a palace of a hut;
But I'm too old to be romantic, child.
Hie to your father now, if you can find him,
And fill his ears with what you've seen and heard:

Digitized by Google

I would have Champlain tell me of this plan—

Re-enter M. BOULLÉ, *conversing with another gentleman.*

Why, there he is, returned with Monsieur L'Ange,[2]
While yet his railleries echo in our ears:
Run, child, to greet them.

HELÈNE. I would rather not,
Ma mère.

MADAME B. What, not to greet your father, *chère?*

HELÈNE. My father has but left us; and, besides,
When Monsieur L'Ange is with him—

MADAME B. Fie, Helène!
Then I must go myself to make amend.

CHAMPLAIN. Who is this Monsieur L'Ange, Helène?

HELÈNE. A friend
Of mother's, and a poet filled with verse,
Who'd have you praise his lines whate'er they be.

CHAMPLAIN. No great offence in one who singeth well.

HELÈNE. A great offence in one who singeth ill.

CHAMPLAIN. And what of him who buildeth ill, perchance?
You like the *Habitation?*

HELÈNE. I do.

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN. And him who built it?

HELÈNE. Ah, of course I must,
He being my betrothèd gallant knight.

CHAMPLAIN. My love will always love him?

HELÈNE. Yea, I will.

CHAMPLAIN. In Paris or Quebec?

HELÈNE. In Paris and Quebec.

CHAMPLAIN. True love for love, my heart?

HELÈNE. Ay, love for love.
And, hap what will, your *femme petite* alway.
This is my song of love, while Monsieur L'Ange
Is still reciting his to other ears.
I sing it oft when you are far away:
Now may I sing it?

CHAMPLAIN. Yea, my dear one, sing.

HELÈNE'S SONG.

Oh, who will tell me what is love,
Far as all sense careers,
Far as the ear may list above,
To the music of the spheres,
Far as the eye and hand can prove
The truth of what appears?
Tell me, oh, tell me what is love,
To the soul that love endears?

And a still voice reveals, nor ever conceals,
That love is the truth of one's own:
The impulse of soul that flouts man's control,
And never is ever outgrown.

Digitized by Google

L'ANGE. Bravo, ma'mselle, a song to celebrate!
Technique in taste, and music *à-propos,*
Such as I wish would hap to my poor verse
When runs it into song!

BOULLÉ. Monsieur Champlain, whose faith is ocean wide:
The poet L'Ange, whose pen would etch the stars!
You two should each the other know,—the one
The arbiter of uncoined wealth in France
The new; the other, umpire of our higher gifts
In France the old.

HELÈNE. Oh, father, dear, forego.

MADAME B. Wicked always, spice-tinctured as in pickle!
Excuse him, gentlemen, it is his way.

BOULLÉ. *Excusez-moi* may kill a courtier's luck;
So will I seek reprisal otherwhere.

HELÈNE. Then, father mine, you threatful homicide,
Since shuttle makes no come-and-go like you,
Now in, now out, I think I'll loving ride
A la volante,[8] to keep you out of murder's way.
Pardonne, messieurs, I bid you *au revoir.*

[*Exeunt* HELÈNE *and* M. BOULLÉ.

MADAME B. Be seated, gentlemen, nor think to heed
The *contretemps.* The kitten only plays
Her father's game of words. Now you may speak,
Champlain, of this Quebec of yours.

Digitized by Google

L'ANGE. Ah, *oui;*
There's no romance so full of quickening spice
To our Parisian palate, epic or ethnic,
As this new world you have been shaking up:
I've had a hair-brained wish to cross with you.

MADAME B. What, you to cross the seas?

L'ANGE. Why not, madame?

MADAME B. Where life is out of tune with use-and-wont?

L'ANGE. Ah, there's the charm.

MADAME B. For mariners a-bold,
But not for courtier-poets such as you.

L'ANGE. Ay, even for priests and poets, brides and beaux,
For mariners and manikins.

MADAME B. There are no priests.

CHAMPLAIN. None for the nonce, madame, but there will be.

L'ANGE. And where there's work for priests *en capuchon*
There's chance for poet's sacrifice in verse.

MADAME B. But what's the work for priests to do out there?

L'ANGE. Ah, there's the luck for me. Should all the blacks
Be deafened 'gainst the call of reverend *père,*
'Tis well that some poor soul should be near by,

Digitized by Google

To play the part of soonest penitent.
Should monsieur, therefore, deem me bad enough,
To give my *ennui* cowboy cabin room,
I think I'll go: what say you, sir, for me?

CHAMPLAIN. There's work for all out there, poet and priest,
Patron and penitent, pioneers of all—
A world to be subdued for what it holds,
To be replenished full with betterment,
In God's own time and ours.

L'ANGE. I think I'll go,
If *monsieur* will but take me, first of my kind,
To plant the harmony of words anew.

MADAME B. Ha, ha, and homesick die of lonesomeness!
You foolish man! you go to Canada?

L'ANGE. Ay, even there, where Paris sends in time
Her sweetest child, to be a governor's wife.
Pardonne, monsieur, and you *ma chère madame*!

MADAME B. Ah, that is other: years take time to lapse.

L'ANGE. The olden prophets were fore-running bards,
And I would like to greet this land of promise,
To meet Brulé, this master of the woods,
And Pontgravé, brave master of the tides—
To verse St. Lawrence and its Tadousac,
The Montmorency and its foaming roar—
To climb proud Mont du Gas,[4] and view afar

Digitized by Google

The limits of the land you've written of,
From eastward known to westward unexplored.

CHAMPLAIN. Welcome your words and wish, prophetic-toned
Of faith's repute a-chipping at its shell!
Ah, madame, we are men at one; so look
Not ill at ease. The things that come to pass
Give promise of their coming, and we should take
The promise by the hand as I do Monsieur L'Ange.
Nay, smile away your frown; and bless you, sir,
For your esteem of what is not a dream.
Pardonne, madame: you yet will give us blessing.

MADAME B. A blessing bleached with tears!

CHAMPLAIN. Nay, nay, not that;
Another voyage, with Monsieur L'Ange on board,
And yet another with the Recollets,[5]
We'll pave the way for colonists' thanksgiving
And natives' penitence—the prelude meet
To after-streams of permanent success
And your acceptance of a wider faith
In this great enterprise. Monsieur L'Ange,
I'll foster what you've said, and further soon
Your thought of joining us. Meantime adieu,
Madame et monsieur.

L'ANGE. Nay, I'll go with you.

MADAME B. Philippe, a word; you will not go to Canada?

L'ANGE. I think I will; Helène is going there,
You know, and I would spy the land for her.

[*Exeunt* L'ANGE *and* CHAMPLAIN.

Digitized by Google

MADAME BOULLÉ *sings.*

Oh, who can tell that there is a love
Which never sojourneth with fears,
Or who will say that this world can prove
The good that ever endears?
How cometh the strength from within or above,
To sanctify love with our tears?
Nay, tell me, oh, tell me what is love,
That still overcometh the years!

And a still voice reveals, nor ever conceals
That love is the truth of one's own:
The impulse of soul that flouts man's control
And never is ever outgrown.

ACT II. SCENE 2.

A church in Paris in which service is being held commemorative of the departure of the Recollet Fathers to Canada, including the Reverends DENIS JAMAY, JEAN D'OLBEAU, JOSEPH LE CARON, *and* PACIFIQUE DU PLESSIS, *priests of that order.*

The poet L'ANGE *and* LOUIS HEBÉRT, *druggist, discovered on the Square facing the church.*

L'ANGE. What solemn, stirring times, you well may say,
My friend, Hebért,[6] for those intent to go!
Were I not L'Ange the poet, I would be
Champlain the explorer. Yea, the land is all

Digitized by Google

He says it is, from Orleans unto Helen's Isle.[7]
Nor will he rest until 'tis more—a land
Of rich returns to pioneer and patron.

HEBÉRT. 'Tis well the priests are going; now our wives
Will not be sullen, as they've always been,
When talk is made of Canada for them.
A home is but the way to heaven, they think,
With priests to bring us in and send us out:
And they are slow to chance eternal bliss,
Whate'er befall us hen-pecked lords of earth.
My drugs have saving here, the priests for yonder,
And priests are ne'er with them a market drug;
So I am glad they're going.

L'ANGE. I see your drift:
You'd have your fortune told.

HEBÉRT. For me and mine,
'Twere better it were made.

L'ANGE. For heaven or earth?

HEBÉRT. No fortune has a market gauge in heaven.

L'ANGE. Then I can tell your fortune just as well
As priest can do, barring the price. Your palm
Stretch out: we bards, you know, are said to have
The second sight.

HEBÈRT. If so, we'd better haste
Within, to keep the devil safely shelved
In both of us a second-hand for sale.

L'ANGE. But what of setting sail for Canada,
Your wife and all?

Digitized by Google

HEBÉRT. Ah, time enough for that.
Couillard, Duchene and I[s] have converse held
At sundry times, with others of our kind.
When service once is over, we may talk
Awhile with those that hap along—Desportes,
Pivert and others who are hot to hear
Of this new land. Ho, who comes here?

Enter M. *and* MADAME BOULLÉ, CHAMPLAIN *and* MADEMOISELLE HELÈNE. L'ANGE *gives them greeting.* LOUIS HEBÉRT *goes within the church.*

L'ANGE. Ah, fair Helène! Good-morrow to you all!
The blessing on the reverends now within
Is doubly blessed, since you have mustered here.
May I, poor bardling, take my place with you?

BOULLÉ. You bing your claim abroad from Canada,
To rank yourself *noblesse* or otherwise.

MADAME B. Nay, heed him not, take humble place with me,
And let him else unedge the razor of his wit.
Champlain is over scars from shaving on the way,
Beyond my saving him. 'Tis only in a church
My goodman's satire takes untongued repose.

BOULLÉ. Or when his wife's asleep.

MADAME B. Come, rescue me
From his retorts: they are beyond the boil.

L'ANGE. *Merci, madame;* nay, give me but a word
With Champlain here. This speaketh prosperously
For France the new—this fervent priestly move.

Digitized by Google

Tidings of Godspeed there is more to tell
When opportune. The monks have made a stir,
To give you women for your colony.
Hebért I've seen, and others of his glow
To see Quebec or die. The iron is heating;
And, when this service nears its last amen,
I know where we can meet them pertinent,
To season words. But more of this anon.
And now, madame, your most submissive slave
Is all your own, as usher to a seat.

[*They enter the church with the thronging worshippers. Two aged priests converse outside during the lulls in the service.*

FIRST PRIEST. Why has this Charles Bourbon[9] been so keen
To call Franciscans to a task severe
As Mother Church hath known?

SECOND PRIEST. Perchance the choice
Was made to mollify the heresy,
That mixes Capuchin and Huguenot
As cattle of a stripe, both branded poor.

FIRST P. But never was a Bourbon Huguenot?[10]

SECOND P. No more than was Coligny diplomat
And Huguenot, when Medicis was queen;[11]
No more than is the half-and-half De Monts,
Nor more than is his second in command,
This Champlain de Brouage, who, gossips say,
Would make a queen of fair Helène Boullé.

FIRST P. You have it all by heart.

Digitized by Google

SECOND P. Nay, more than that;
I know what else mishapp'd in Acadié,
When priest and parson, voiding God's own work,
Made strife a sanctity of hell let loose.

FIRST P. What would you have, since thus you do complain?

SECOND P. What would I have? One order for one field—
Ad gloriam dei in church and state.

FIRST P. That is, the Recollets for Canada?

SECOND P. The Recollets? And bane the Jesuits?[12]

FIRST P. One order for one field you've said yourself.

SECOND P. Ay, ay, but that an order full equipped
For any field, with weapons various-edged.

FIRST P. And thus of all our orders you would choose—

SECOND P. The Jesuits for certain, and none other.
They are the pioneers of Mother Church,
Daring the shambles of a rotting zeal
To captivate: ne'er lingering for redress
As do the veterans of St. Dominic,[13]
Nor begging for the lees of life, as do
These saints of homespun garb and sandalled feet,
For whom the anthem draweth near, within,
Its final note of farewell ecstasy.

FIRST P. Ah, now I know, a partizan you'd be,
A something that the secular priest should shun.

Digitized by Google

SECOND P. Be that as may, 'tis my belief assured
The Jesuits will sail and yet hold sway
In Canada, defying every ill
That thorns the path of martyrdom.
The peoples westward yonder savage are,
Their feathered pride and hate and cruelty
Raising acclaim, in poverty's attire,
To vice bedecked in valour's running gear.
To Christianize is no first step for such:
They must be civilized in part at least—
Yea, be brought up, before they be brought in.
And that is what the Jesuits will do—
The school a-leading to the church's door.

FIRST P. Perchance these Recollets will see to that.

SECOND P. The Recollets! The vim to fight is lost
When begging paves the way. Beseech, implore,
St. Francis says. Scorch into faithfulness,
St. Dominic cries. But from the brave Ignace
There comes command to do or die, or win
The crown for daring in the Church's cause.

Enter from the church LOUIS HEBERT *and* GUILLAUME COUILLARD.

FIRST P. Well put, *mon frère,* with straight exactitude;
Though why the Jesuits, not the Recollets,
Should pioneer New France with most success
Must wait a verdict from chief-justice time.
Meantime Godspeed we'll give them, as they pass.
See there are two, who'd be as we, to greet
Them on their way! What, one of them my friend,
The druggist round the corner,[14] where I buy

Digitized by Google

My snuff, and get an over-change in gossipings!
Good day, my son: you've been to church, I see!

HEBÉRT. Ay, for example's sake to better men,
Who fain would hold a service out of doors
To complement an altared benison.
Nay, no rebuke: 'tis we who are in fault,
Forsaking duty, ere the organ's still,
To give our restless worldly-mindedness
A turn, while prating of this Canada.
This is my neighbour, Guillaume Couillard,
Who longs for *mal-de-mer* so violently,
That all the bottled drugs upon my shelves
Will hardly cure him of his fevered wit:
To Canada he'd wander, *coute que coute.*

FIRST P. The malady is spreading, then, it seems,
With wholesale drugs as cureless as retail.
Methinks a certain *vendeur de tabac*[15]
I know is mastered by a like disease:
To Canada he'd wander, *coute que coute,*
Barring the frownings of his comely spouse.

HEBÉRT. Ah, father, ev'n a *vendeur de tabac*
May sneeze a secret o'er a can of snuff,
Without its getting wings: these Recollets
Have not been told my secret, yet their zeal
Hath mollified my better-half, and voids
In part the force of your betrayal.
But here they come, the faithful four of them![16]

Enter the Recollets from the church.

FIRST P. We give you *bon voyage,* my friends and I,
The gospel light is safely in your hands,

Digitized by Google

To bear across the seas. May God be yours,
A weal and welcome in the lands beyond,
Where sunlight waits its Christian counterpart.

FATHER JAMAY. *Bien merci,* there is supporting joy
In expectation and your friendly words.

FATHER D'OLBEAU. *Merci* likewise for what you pleasing say.

FATHER LE CARON. What blessing 'tis when friendship is sincere.

FATHER DU PLESSIS. Quebec and Canada will hear of this.

HEBÉRT. And I would also wish you joy, *mes pères,*
With some foreboding in my fickle heart,
That I may yet have blessing at your hands,
As one of your parishioners out west.

FATHER JAMAY. Think you of going thither to remain?

HEBÉRT. Ay, even so, *mon père,* if this my friend
Can find a tinker skilled enough to keep
The bottom in our luck.

FATHER JAMAY. What! two of you
To be our mission-settlers?

HEBÉRT. Ay, and more;
But here comes Monsieur L'Ange and all the rest;
And 'twere not badly timed, to supplement
The solemn anthem with a secular song,
If my poor, wayward voice may raise the tune.

Digitized by Google

Singing by the whole company.

From afar o'er the seas a message has come—
The west paying court to the east,
Begging a light from the altars of home,
To gladden the homes of the west.
Mont-joie to the fathers who carry the light;
Peace follow their footsteps of love;
Through them let the gospel still measure its might,
From earth to the heavens above.

Farewell, gentle *pères,*
Accept of our prayers,
Uplift for your weal.
Adieu, gentle *pères;*
God hear your fond prayers,
Rewarding your zeal.

L'ANGE. And laud I do the sentiment unique,
As if the phrasing were my very own.
A farewell not of sorrow, but of hope
All France will phrase, echoing from here,
Where France the New receives her baptism.

All sing again.

Bow, then, with cross in hand,
Raising our prayers in blending throng:
Vive l'eglise!
Bend, then, as under command,
Making our vows in solemn song:
Vive les Recollets!

Digitized by Google

[*The Fathers, rising from their knees, group themselves around the* BOULLÉ *circle, with* CHAMPLAIN *and* HELÈNE BOULLÉ *in the foreground.*

Tableau, all singing.

Up, then, with cap in hand,
Raise we our *vivats* famed in song,
Vive le roi!
Up, then, to greet the land,
Raise we our *vivats* long and strong,
Vive le gouverneur!

ACT II. SCENE 3.

On the woodland pathway leading to HEBÉRT'S *house, overlooking the lake-like expansion of the St. Lawrence from the plateau of upper town.* ETIENNE JONQUÊT *discovered lingering in the twilight of a summer's evening, to keep his tryst with his sweetheart,* ANNE HEBÉRT.

JONQUÊT. She is a jewel in a wilderness
Of wondrous setting. Would I ward her mine
From wilderness neglect? God bless the minx!
In any sphere—in country new or old—
She's fit to shine, a woman of degree,
A wife to prize in plenty or in want.

Digitized by Google

New France is but a step-son to the king,
Longing for heeding that may never come;
Yet would I be this pioneer's son-in-law,
To fend the daughter from the father's straits,
While fighting with these traders' selfishness.
Fie on this sand-blind turpitude, say I,
That counts these woodlands only peltry wilds,
And plans a scrimping servitude for us!
Breathing there is for all and sundry here—
Freedom's full breathing and its nurture, too;
And, if the king—but what's the king of France
To us, who turns deaf ear to Champlain's plaints,
And makes of none effect his pioneer-plans,
To give Quebec its growth? Ho, some one comes,
Not with the gossamer pace of her I love,
Whose step is light as drip of morning dew,
But with deliberative gait of males,
Deep in their own concernments. Two of them
There are. Ah, let me step aside to watch,
Till Anne comes after them to meet me here.

Enter SIEUR HEBÉRT *and* GUILLAUME COUILLARD.

COUILLARD. They cannot bar us from our harvestings,
Nor bane us from the houses we have built—
God helping us to face with heart the odds
Of shortened seasons and acquiring skill.

HEBÉRT. 'Tis more a case of stomach than of heart:
The brave may live, but foodless we must die.
And, if the Company only count their pelts,
Ne'er making tale of toilers' mouths to fill,
Famine must stalk in time around the fort,
With Indian prowlers near to steal the crumbs.

Digitized by Google

COUILLARD. Crumbs and our lives to boot, the fiends!
Who knows
What next they'll do, should Champlain pardon them,
For murder and this massacre fore-planned
In terror for their scalps.

HEBÉRT. Beauchasse has lost
His hostages,[17] the Recollets their charge,
And Champlain, when he comes, must cast accounts,[18]
To show how much a white man's life is worth,
Measured by beavers' skins.

COUILLARD. Beauchasse, Beauchasse,
Toujours Beauchasse! Murder is nought to him,
Save yet another stomach less, as shaves
He down his rations to starvation's edge—
Girding—to swell the Company's dividends,
Whate'er befalls Quebec.

HEBÉRT. Give me your hand,
Guillaume Couillard: our minds are one to fight,
In silent concert, for the poor down-trod,
Till these our pioneer-harvests make us rich.
Beauchasse would skim the whey of goats, or tithe
The buttercups afield for growing there,
Charge us two prices for our pulse and pork,
And scowl his market-thanks. But such as he
Go out like penny-dips, before the dawn
And noonday sheen of democratic rule.
All compromise with crime, or white or black,
Must then give way to justice.

COUILLARD. Laugh, you jade,
Till Cupid comes your way! But what for us
With penny-dip in hand?

Digitized by Google

HEBÉRT. Live as my wife
And daughters do, on love for all mankind;
Or even as Champlain does, to make ends meet,
Between his mole-eyed masters and our needs.

COUILLARD. Champlain, indeed! Were all like him in zeal,
The colony would be a feast of love.

HEBÉRT. Safely you say. He is a man of men.
To live on love he would be married soon,
And then we'll have him oftener at home,
To make a town of us. That makes you laugh;
But then 'tis said that you should also wed,
Now that you have a house to shield your bride.
Ha, ha, Guillaume, there is no tax on wives,
Beauchasse or no Beauchasse. You've thought of it?
Is she of France, like Champlain's fair Helène?

COUILLARD. You have a daughter, Sieur Hebért.

HEBÉRT Ay, two of them.

COUILLARD. But I have only room at home for one,
If God will move your heart to give me her.

HEBÉRT. If God will move her mother's heart, you mean.
'Tis heaven and the women folks who claim
The patronage of Hymen, dragging oft
Poor escapading Cupid by the ear
Out of the way.

COUILLARD. Your daughter Anne it is
I would declare my wife with your consent.

Digitized by Google

[ÉTIENNE JONQUÊT, *having patiently kept out of sight during the foregoing conversation, looks out from behind the trunk of a large tree, with anything but satisfaction pictured in his face.*

HEBÉRT. 'Tis Anne, you say! With or without her love?
For, if without, she really can't be yours.

JONQUÊT, (*looking relieved*). She really can't be yours.

HEBÉRT. Anne has a mind
That needs full share of wooing to be won.

JONQUÊT (*aside*). Ay, to be won.

COUILLARD. And yet 'tis Anne I'd win.

JONQUÊT (*as an echo*). And yet 'tis Anne *I'd* win.

ANNE HEBÉRT *enters from behind and brings her face near* JONQUÊT'S

ANNE. Nay, is't not Anne
You've won. Move not, but let us overhear,
And then we'll know what after-steps to take.

HEBÉRT. First move to make is yours, not mine, Guillaume,
Although my weather eye has not been closed
Of late, as yours has been.

JONQUÊT *and* ANNE (*in ecstasies*). As yours has been!

Digitized by Google

COUILLARD. Which is your weather eye?

JONQUÊT *and* ANNE (*aside*). Ay, which is it?

HEBÉRT. The one on Anne and young Etienne Jonquêt.

[*The lovers embrace.*

ANNE. Shall I run after with a kiss and tell
Him what a dear old man he is?

JONQUÊT. Not yet,
Ma chère, you might make some mistake. Kiss me
Instead, and let us give their converse scope
Beyond the track of this our happiness
Rounding the winning-post—the prize for me,
A winsome, loving wife.

ANNE. Ah, poor Guillaume!
See how he bows his head and asks no more
About my father's weather eye. In time,
Perhaps, that weather eye may light
Upon him and my sister, as on us.
I would not have him sad for very long:
He's good, and has been kind to all of us,
Though he has forced me to betray my love
To one who thinks it his. Etienne Jonquêt!
See yonder have they silent disappeared
Where the Grande Place spreads[19] outward from the fort
That overlooks the *Habitation.*
Let us walk thitherward to count the stars.

Digitized by Google

SONG.

Out from the fringe of the primal grove,
There cometh a voice from the stars;
It whispers of love from the far-off above,
From Venus aglow unto Mars.
To you and to me, in the ebb of the sea,
The echoes much nearer belong;
How they vibrate the soul, beyond our control:
"I love you, my love," is their song.
Refrain—
Live love, linger love,
'Tis the song of heaven and earth:
Greet love, meeting love,
Under the stars in their mirth.

Mark you the tress of the moonlight's sheen,
How it silkens the face of the sea:
Its dimples play peep, from the tide-smiling deep,
With peace running winsome and free.
How fair is all this, blowing bliss and a kiss,
To life that would ever be strong;
'Tis the saintship of love, from the far-off above,
"I love you, my love," is its song.
Refrain—Live love, linger love, etc.

There is shadow and sheen in the gloaming hour,
Its message comes nearer and near;
God hallows the song that's dispassioned of wrong:
The shadows for us have no fear.
Then pledge we the vow of our ever and now,
The mirth of the stars to prolong;
Let us take up the strain, that has ken of no wane,
With "Love me, my love," for its song.
Refrain—Live love, linger love, etc.

Digitized by Google

ACT II. SCENE 4.

MADAME ANNE JONQUÊT (*née* ANNE HEBÉRT) *discovered seated in front of the Hebért homestead—in the open space overlooking the outer harbour of Quebec, and its outlet channels on either side of the Island of Orleans. Hers had been one of the first marriages solemnized by the Recollets in the colony of New France; and now, with the prospect of motherhood upon her, the scenes of her own childhood recur to her mind, as she tunefully murmurs a song all by herself. Her husband has been absent for a season in the woods.*

Afar o'er the ocean, whose dangers men dare,
To tempt expectation's reward,
There cometh an echo of cheer in the air,
To the children of France mounting guard—
Away, far away, in this land of the new,
Where love maketh ransom of sorrow in view,
Where, only for love, our hopes were but few.

ETIENNE JONQUÊT, *her husband, having just arrived from his excursion, replies to his wife's song, all unseen, from the grove near by.*

Away from the wilds the *coureurs-de-bois* roam,[20]
In search of the wealth hid therein,
There cometh a message presaging of home,
To those who'll enjoy what they win:
There was a home yonder, there is a home here,
And love brings the message nearer and near,
The solvent supreme that casteth out fear.

Digitized by Google

JONQUÊT. Ah, lovèd one, you surely did not think
The woods would be insensate to your voice,
Even were your husband on a distant trail,
With him, my namesake,[21] and the rest of them.
I have returned all well to find you well,
Though mellow-toned from matron worthiness,
And love a-challenging despondency.
Belovèd Anne, 'tis glad I am to kiss you glad:
Nay, what else need we long for in our joy?
And, if we guess what these fond kisses bear
Of prophecy, how dangerously inane
Becomes all sadness, in our ecstasy
Of love for love, of faith for faith, of hope
For hope.

ANNE. You have been far away and long.

JONQUÊT. And you've been sad for lack of lover's talk,
Despite the cheer of kindred near. Nay, nay,
Sweet face, these tears are out of place, if aught
Of anguish taints their pearl drops. 'Tis love
That weeps, and love must kiss love's tears away.
Come, sit upon my lap, and hear a tale,
The first I have to tell, now I am home,
With store of others for your hungry ear—
A tale to make New France a-birth with joy,
All else delayed in telling. Think of it;
The master would be married.[22]

ANNE. Who? Champlain?

JONQUÊT. Yea, of a truth, the governor himself.

ANNE. To Eustache Boullé's sister, yet a child?

Digitized by Google

JONQUÊT. To Monsieur Boullé's daughter, woman grown:
I knew you'd surely guess aright.

ANNE. To live
With her in Canada, as man and wife?

JONQUÊT. Ay, here to find prolonged abode with us,
And other menseful married folk. Ha, ha,
I thought you'd smile to hear the gladsome news!
When we espoused, the first in this lone land,
Some little noise was made, and merriment,
Barring the frowns of poor Guillaume Couillard:
But now the faucets of a country's joy
Must run full tap, to celebrate aglee
The coming of Quebec's first *chatelaine.*

ANNE. Methinks she'll find her chateau's glebe unkempt,
With weather leakings in its roof and walls.
Neglect and ruin run amuck of late,
Her brother and the good old Pontgravé
Had much ado to caulk[23] its gaping chinks
Against the zero siftings in and out,
And springtide's drippings, while they housed therein:
And naught's been done to make it fit abode,
Since then, for one brought up in luxury's lap.

JONQUÊT. Well thought of, gentle one! But luxury's lap
Has seldom weaned a maid to hie away
From refuge on a husband's lap. Madame!
Is this your answer from the lap that's yours?
Come, kiss away the pain you thus inflict.

Digitized by Google

Helène Boullé, the maid, is none the less
The lover and beloved than you are mine—
She to be wedded, you a wedded wife;
And love's the hill of hope o'erlooking all
The gifts of Hymen, waving them aside—
Sweet fate defying fate and all its woes
Prospective. You the *chatelaine* will love
As others do—God bless them all for it!
Nay, more—a blessing it will be to her
To know the Hebért household, as it's been
To me.

ANNE. Scant as you are of haste to greet
Them after your return.

JONQUÊT. Ah, minx ingrate!
Is't thus unfair you throw the tempter's gage,
Before my tale be done? *Bien revoir!*
Good day, madame! I'll hie me there at once!

ANNE. Nay, stay, dear Etienne, yet awhile with me.
'Twas but the glee of courting days come back.
The witch is in me yet, though mellow-toned,
As you have said. I long to hear your tale
Complete. How came you by the tidings?
When will the wedding be, and where be spent
The honeymoon, before our welcome bids
The *Habitation* be ready in and out,
To grace the coming of our *chatelaine?*
Now, take me up again and tell me all.
Nay, let me sit. Some one may come this way.
Look! I am right: some one is on the hill:
Guillaume Couillard is in the step approaching.
See there! his sombre face surmounts the slope.

Digitized by Google

Invite him in to hear the wondrous news;
Then call the others hither—dear Guillemette,
Madame la mère, my father, too, perchance.

COUILLARD *approaches at the call of* JONQUÊT.

Bonjour, Guillaume, my husband has returned:
He's just arrived and goes to warn the house,
That he is here with me. The news he brings
Is worth the telling. What think you such can be?

COUILLARD. Alas, sweet Anne, you know how far askew
My poor divining cap has ever been.

ANNE. In love affairs your own. But you can guess,
Beyond all cozening, what befalls the maid,
Steadfast in love, and true to her betrothal.

COUILLARD. Marriage, divorce, or death.

ANNE. The answer's blunt,
As is your wont, now you are soured at love.
The first is guess enough to solve the truth
Of Champlain's destiny.

COUILLARD. Champlain! How now?
Is't he who's married?

ANNE. Nay, nay, not yet;
But he will marry soon, as wise men do,
And, dear Guillaume, I've thought you very wise.

COUILLARD. Before you met Jonquêt.

Digitized by Google

ANNE. Before and since.
Champlain but shows the way, as e'er he does,
To prove New France a living place for souls,
Where social law may reign a happiness.
Marriage or death, you've said—ah, not divorce,
Which savours of a world where love is dead—
May come to those betrothed, and I would see
You safe betrothed before I die—perchance
A married man—to shrift me from the weight
Of having pained a heart as true as thine.
I know full well the anguish you have borne—
How you have loved me. 'Tis no sinfulness
To tell you so, with Etienne all my own—
Dearest to me, as God and heaven should be
To those whom death has laid a hand upon.

COUILLARD. Anguish and death! Why speak you thus, dear Anne?
You're Jonquêt's wife, yet still my best beloved.
Avaunt the morbid thought, God giving grace
To fend us from the semblancy of sin.
Oh, Anne, you break my heart, as break you will
The hearts of all—of Etienne and your kin—
By christening death companion of your love.
Root out the croaking of a dread so sad;
Reserve your strength of will as you were wont.
Remorse were mine to claim you've brought me pain:
Remorse were bitter, were it mine to slight,
By thought or word or deed, your strange behest,
To follow pattern, *à la Benedict*,
When Champlain's bride has reached my "guess enough."
Nay, nay, sweet Anne, look not so sad of eye:

Digitized by Google

I am not funning with your seriousness.
I love you still, responsive to my heart;
And yet, obedient unto Jonquêt's wife,
I'll do her will as faithful as a spouse,
And marry me the wife she wise may choose,
To fill the gap 'twas hers alone to fill.

ANNE. Dear, good Guillaume, there is no gap in life:
It comes and goes, but yet is never gone;
And I would have you happy, that is all.
See, yonder come Etienne and dear Guillemette,
Across the sward to welcome you within.

COUILLARD. These be the twain Hebért should first have matched,
And left my Anne heart-whole to marry me. [*An aside.*

ANNE. Guillemette, Guillaume! These names well pair in sound,
And love oft sings her songs alliterate. [*An aside.*
If you were married, with a daughter born,
How, think you, would your wife, Guillaume, desire,
From love of you, to have the child baptized?

COUILLARD. In terms of Holy Church!

ANNE. But by what name?

COUILLARD. Were you my wife, I'd have it christened Anne.

ANNE. I'd have it named Guillemette, were I your wife.

COUILLARD. And I would be content, as dutiful
Whichever way you'd choose.

Digitized by Google

ANNE. Guillemette, Guillaume!
Are constant names, one helpmeet to the other:
Come hither, 'Mette, and greet Guillaume: of you
We have been thinking. Kneel you by my side,
With grouping from us all as in a picture,
And I will sing you something from my heart.

ANNE *sings.*

Guillemette and Guillaume, with nest for their home,
Are happy as ever the daylight is long;—

GUILLEMETTE. Fie, fie, dear Anne, you are not well.
Your arm,
My dear, and we will go within.

ANNE. A verse,
And only one, and then I will retire.

ANNE *continues singing.*

With hearts beating true, their vows they renew,
In proof of the love that is strong.
Ah, could I be there, the sweetness to share,
To flutter that nest with my glee—
I'd kiss you, my dear, and lisp in your ear,
The happiness mothers foresee.

Refrain of ANNE'S *song*—
Loving is living, and death is no dying,
Is song for the day and the night—
The song of retreat from the sin and the sighing,
To the realm where all love finds its might.

[ANNE *faints and is carried within.*

Digitized by Google

COUILLARD. The love that glows prophetic, such as this,
While braving pain, and even daring death—
Though dying, surely, is not hers as yet,
If God be wise—such love aglow illumes
The sordid soul and burns, from nerve to vein,
The sense of worship in a man. Worship of whom?
Of God, or woman born of womankind?
Of one who reacheth not my Anne's *morale?*
Let me be wise and not grow mad. Here comes
Her husband, ah, *her husband,* God forgive:
Stay, friend Jonquêt, your wife—what of your wife?
She is not dead or dying, struck by death?

JONQUÊT. She is not well, and I must hie for help.[24]

COUILLARD. And I may hie me for my help also.
Alas, the agony that's bred of love
And lonesomeness! What would the world be
For man, were there no women in it? Laugh!
The damned are said to laugh, when no reply
Is theirs. Sweet Anne Hebért is only wed:
She is not dead, and there's one woman left
For me to love, to worship. Hie for help,
Waiting to wait again, waiting to wait.

Digitized by Google

ACT II. SCENE 5.

GUILLAUME COUILLARD *discovered sauntering around the Grande Place, or open space near the outer edge of the Stadacona woods, and thus soliloquizing on the death of* ANNE JONQUÊT *and the affairs of the colony.*

COUILLARD. She's dead! ay, months ago, sublimed from what
She was to what she is, the same, perchance,
In spirit, only escaped environment
And all its disabilities of love.
Her babe died with her, whom her husband grieves,
Not she, returned her own so soon again.
Her kindred's tears unburden them: they mourn
With one another. Ay, but what of me,
Unbidden guest to join my grief with theirs,
Despite her own request that I should wed
Her sister? Was it sacrilege for her
To burn a solemn candle thus to love?
Dare we maintain there's binding in a troth
Where love is not, though death be sanctity?
And yet, ay, even yet, the thought me throbs:
Could it have been a heaven-born vow of hers,
To have me wed Guillemette? And, vow for vow,
Who is the sponsor of that pledge save me,
Leaving it unredeemed, now she is dead?
Champlain, she claimed, was taking him a bride,
To prove New France a living place for souls,
Where social law should reign a happiness.
"All wise men marry," were her very words,
"And I have thought you very wise." Ah, me!

Digitized by Google

For now the message comes that Champlain brings
His fair Helène to Canada in spring—
A message full of meaning to us all.
Could Anne have counselled what was indiscreet?
Would I have shunned the pledge were she in life?
Shall I her pain, now she has more of life?
Alas! What man is wise with thoughts like these,
When there is work to do? Hebért and I
Have made us homes—no miracles of taste
Or comfort, yet the harbingers of what
Quebec may boast, with industry afoot.
The Recollets' zeal has shamed the State's neglect:
Their church near by, their monastery beyond,
Give token of their striving piety
And cure of souls. Near and beyond, they risk
Their ease, to sow the seeds of truth. Early
And late, they faithful dig and plant and reap—
Giving ensample, secular and divine,
To all who would revise their lives aright.
But where's the growth? Nay, rather, what's the shame?
Grief turns the edge of calumny, or one
Might urge his ire against what keeps Quebec
From spreading sail. The greed for dividends,
Sectarian spite, and trading rivalries,
Beauchasse's graft and warehouse tyranny,
Breeding an idleness among the poor—
These be the canker ills that perforate
All thrift, and stunt the country's growth. Champlain!
"A name to conjure with," says Pontgravé;
But what has all the conjuring done for us?
There is the *Habitation* below,
A semblance of decay to be restored:
Yonder the lines are laid to wall his fort,

Digitized by Google

With only hope deferred a-building it:
His explorations and his tribal wars
Have brought him fame and expectation,
But little growing to his *entrepôt:*
What then? Is't ever thus to be a raid
From hand to mouth, with worn-out patience,
Waiting to wait again, waiting to wait.

Enter HEBÉRT *and* PONTGRAVÉ.

HEBÉRT. So, ho, Guillaume Couillard, 'tis you who guard
Needless the ramparts of the fort to be!
Friend Pontgravé his counsel vends to me,
And espionage makes of what's in store for us
When once the wind veers fair. Champlain, he claims,
Comes armed at last, the king his gage,
With ample powers, second to Montmorenci's,
To rule a lord-in-chief in Canada,
With civic jurisdiction over all.
So all may yet be well.

COUILLARD. He brings a wife?

PONTGRAVÉ. Ha, ha, how scents the bachelor his rights,
Detecting reservation in the sway
Of even a monarch absolute! Well ta'en,
Couillard; but it were better far for you
To follow suit and give him countenance,
Risking a woman's rule to amplify your own.

COUILLARD. Where will he house her, as she should be housed,
A viceroy's spouse?

Digitized by Google

PONTGRAVÉ. The Company may do
What handsome does, to cultivate good faith.

COUILLARD. The Company will do what it has done,
Unless the law compel it: that is, nothing
Which may impair its spoils and dividends.
The Jews esteemed the Gentiles as a law
Unto themselves, and so may we regard
Monopoly—the main chance for its law;
Its *meum* and its *tuum* find their source
In number one, the only deity
Beauchasse has found within his holy writ.

PONTGRAVÉ. But now the rascal's testament is torn,
And you may laugh him safely out of court,
For charging double at his masters' wink.
Champlain has just withstood these robbers' leer
And their demands for gain; and, when his ship
Is moored, we'll greet him as our governor
In word and deed, one born to rule aright.

HEBÉRT. So there, Guillaume, what better news than that?
Quebec will grow apace. The fort will rise,
Protective of us all. Our *chatelaine*
Will be our queen. The law will reign supreme.

PONTGRAVÉ. And this our friend Couillard will marry soon
Some maiden fair on shipboard or on shore.

HEBÉRT. 'Twill be a glorious sight.

PONTGRAVÉ. Ay, which the most?
The Couillard wedding or Champlain's return—

Digitized by Google

The one a prelude to the other? There!
I'm done with gasconading; let us bring
Our heads together with the priests', to make
The most of both events. To-morrow meet
Me at the *Habitation,* to plan,
With proper expectation, the *éclat*
Of what should be a masterpiece of joy.

[*Exit* PONTGRAVÉ.

COUILLARD. The mariner's droll.

HEBÉRT. Ay, droll indeed,
As storms at sea and christened conscience make them.

COUILLARD. 'Twas in a raging storm I was when you
And he came traversing my trail.

HEBÉRT. A storm?

COUILLARD. A veritable avalanche of ire!

HEBÉRT. Against?

COUILLARD. The waywardness of love and fate.

HEBÉRT. And we?

COUILLARD. Did turn the storm aside in me.

HEBÉRT. Bravo for us, and safe relief for you!
'Twas surely Pontgravé who lulled your wrath
By the assurance of his news. You've called him droll;
But, true as steel, he never fails a friend.
He has been overcoming storms and storms,
Year in, year out, braving the ominous clouds,
Cleaving the Atlantic mists, riding its waves,
Daring the dangers of its unknown shores,
For others and the spread of France's trade.

Digitized by Google

COUILLARD. He has dispersed my cloud.

HEBÉRT. What cloud is that?

COUILLARD. The cloud of your bereavement and mine own.

HEBÉRT. Nay, nay, Guillaume, that cannot be dispersed.
Alas, poor Jonquêt and the rest of us!
Why speak of it?

COUILLARD. Because I loved her, too.

HEBÉRT. You loved her, too?

COUILLARD. And would have married her.

HEBÉRT. Alas! alas! the cloud of my bereavement!
No mariner, though droll, can that disperse—
Denser than all I've seen in Canada.

COUILLARD. She is an angel now.

HEBÉRT. True, true, Guillaume,
She is an angel, as she ever was.
You loved her; yea, and so you truly did,
As did we all, and I the most of all.
Ay, ay, Guillaume, compassionate my grief.
I would be home: do you not feel the chill
The moonlit harbour wafts this way? Give me
Your arm, and we will go at once down-by.

COUILLARD. She would not marry me.

HEBÉRT. She loved Jonquêt.

Digitized by Google

COUILLARD. She did, and yet she made me vow to wed.

HEBÉRT. She made you vow to wed?

COUILLARD. And Pontgravé
Would have me wed.

HEBÉRT. Ay, so I heard him say.

COUILLARD. You have a daughter still?

HEBÉRT. *Ma chère* Guillemette?
Ay, so I have; but let us go at once,
The chill is in my bones.

COUILLARD (*aside*). While I have thus
Been getting it from mine.

ACT II. SCENE 6.

The residents of Quebec assembled near the Cul-de-Sac and the Recollets' chapel, to await the arrival of the vessel which CHAMPLAIN, MADAME CHAMPLAIN, *her brother,* EUSTACHE BOULLÉ, *and a goodly company of new settlers are reported to be on board of.* PONTGRAVÉ, SIEUR HEBÉRT, GUILLAUME COUILLARD, ABRAHAM MARTIN, *and others, with the Recollet missionaries, are prominently in charge of the celebration of the governor's arrival.* SIEUR HEBÉRT *has been training the company to sing one or two French choruses*

Digitized by Google

for the occasion, while scouts are on the qui vive to report the approach of the vessel up the channel. A fringe of Indians surround the grouping of the celebrants.

HEBÉRT. Once more the chorus, keeping time with voice!
We'll ring the welkin with our loudest cheer
Before the anchor's dropped.

Up, then, with cap in hand,
Raise we our *vivats* famed in song,
Vive le roi!
Up, then, in sight of land,
Raise we our *vivats* long and strong,
Vive le gouverneur!

Bravo! you have it pat, accent and all:
Hence to the church, to await the final call,
While praying for Quebec and those who come,
To make it more and more the pioneer's home.

The Recollets lead the procession into the church, GUILLAUME *and* GUILLEMETTE COUILLARD, *recently married, bringing up the rear, with greetings from all. A chant sounds from within. After a pause, the scouts rush on the stage, but are restrained from making any immediate announcement. At length a first gun is fired from the ship. Reply is made from the shore. Then there is a hurrying from the church toward the wings, as if to see the vessel at anchor; and finally the new arrivals disembark, headed by* CHAMPLAIN *and* MADAME CHAMPLAIN.

Digitized by Google

Song and Chorus, accentuated by salvos from the river and the land.

Hail to the hero who comes with hope in hand,
To bring Quebec good cheer as heretofore!
Hail to his consort who comes to bless the land!
Hail to our *chatelaine, vive* evermore!

Up, then, with cap in hand,
Raise we our *vivats* famed in song,
Vive le roi!
Up, then, in sight of land,
Raise we our *vivats* long and strong,
Vive le gouverneur!

CHAMPLAIN. These strains I've heard before; *merci,* my friends:
They bring a welcome double-toned sincere, to me
And mine. God grant you *bénédicité,*
Made doubly sacred by the *bénédiction*
These fathers of the Church will first pronounce
Over our coming.

The Recollets head the procession into the church, chanting a sacred march. When all is silent within, two Coureurs-de-bois discuss events, in the open space in front of the church.

First Cour. She's as beautiful as the Madonna in a picture, and that should give us heart.

Second Cour. Beautiful as a lie is surely no high praise to award our governor's wife: whoever saw a Madonna in a picture true to what it stands for?

Digitized by Google

First Cour. If you be a Huguenot, perhaps you can put it better than I can.

Second Cour. Call a man a horse and tabulate his tail. I would say she is the most beautiful of French women, more beautiful by far than any Jewish peasant possibly could be, in a picture or out of it; but that would not be orthodox.

First Cour. Ah, now I know you are a Huguenot.

Second Cour. And who says that a Huguenot is not as much of a Frenchman as you are? Do you know what would happen were you to become a Huguenot?

First Cour. No, what would happen?

Second Cour. You would be as much of a Frenchman as I am, and not one whit worse as a citizen. You would be as good a subject to the king, as faithful a servant to the governor, and as orthodox an admirer of the governor's wife as there is going.

First Cour. Just like Pontgravé, I suppose, who is the good-better-and-best mariner that there is going, as I have heard you say, when you fell foul of him in your encomiums.

Second Cour. But he is neither a better nor a worse mariner because he is a Huguenot.

First Cour. Yet, for all that, he is a Huguenot.

Second Cour. And if he be, what then?

First Cour. And this Madame Champlain is also a

Digitized by Google

Huguenot, though they say her husband didn't know of it too soon, as many others in this burning and shining colony are, who will have to get their *congé,* if the country is to prosper as the king would have it.

Second Cour. That is surely a kind of a mixed judgment, since you have just declared to me that a Huguenot may look like the Madonna in a picture. Quite a compliment, isn't it, to at least one poor Huguenot, since all the rest in your opinion are good-for-nothings.

First Cour. I wish you could hear Eustache Boullé, Madame Champlain's brother, descant on the saintship of these Huguenot smugglers and poachers who escaped him lately down near Bic.

Second Cour. But how does that piece out your doggerel about Huguenots? Eustache Boullé is a Huguenot, as you say his sister is—the one as beautiful as a Madonna in a picture, the other with a praiseworthy verdict against poachers in his mouth. Perhaps you will be claiming soon that the Recollets are Huguenots because they are not Jesuits.

First Cour. Ah, would that they were Jesuits!

Second Cour. How is that?

First Cour. Because, as Jesuits, they would soon put a stopper on the canting throats of all these long-faced psalm singers, and paint the white of their eyes a less turned-up shade.

Second Cour. Beware, young man, and keep a smoother tongue in your head, or some sudden stopper

Digitized by Google

may smash in your front windows. Champlain has hardly any need for poachers of any kind in his realm, neither against the Company's monopoly in peltries, nor in church affairs. The priests and parsons of Port Royal didn't give the pioneers of Acadié such a fine time of it that Champlain or any of us should long for a three-cornered fight in New France among Recollets, Jesuits and Huguenot converts.

First Cour. Yet, all the same, the Jesuits are looking forward, I am told, to being in Canada soon.

Second Cour. Then, say I, as an honest Huguenot, let them come; and, as an honest Frenchman, let them be welcome, as all incomers should be, to these western wilds that are crying out for a civilized and a civilizing population. But 'twere better we should change the subject. I can listen to the sweet chanting of the priests, even if you cannot abide the psalm-singing of the Huguenots, your French compatriots. How the solemn sounds from the little church come echoing down to the water's edge and farther! Is there anything more affecting than this listening from the outside to the worship of one's own? Would there were more settlers here to-day to greet our governor, be his wife Catholic or Huguenot!

First Cour. He himself is never likely to be the latter, if the edict of the king is to be maintained.

Second Cour. That for another time! The service was to be short, and here they come! There is no time for further reply to a man who has seen the Madonna in a picture and has taken her for a Huguenot, and is even now anxious to see her again, as she comes from a Catholic church.

Digitized by Google

Enter CHAMPLAIN *and* MADAME CHAMPLAIN, *with the congregation, resuming their places in the little square in front of the church.*

SONG AND CHORUS.

Again we greet the approved-of regal choice,
Accept the blessings God and Church outpour:
Heaven lending favour, circumstance and voice,
To fill the land with joy from shore to shore.

Up, then, with cap in hand,
Raise we our *vivats* famed in song,
Vive le roi!
Up, then, in sight of land,
Raise we our *vivats* long and strong,
Vive le gouverneur!

CHAMPLAIN. A word to all, revealing the intent
And purpose of the king's decree revised!
Our friend, le Monsieur Guers, Commisionaire,
Will read for us the terms on which now rest
The claims of civic oversight and trade,
As helpmeets to colonial growth. Henceforth,
Whate'er neglect has left of hope deferred
Within the compass of our enterprise,
Must be effaced by quickened industry,
Crowned by the fruits of individual zeal.
The king has promised armament, to enforce
His sovereignty, a fort besides to guard
These heights, and what else needs the dignity
Of rule, to keep in check the foes of peace;
While from the Company's revenues appraised
The colony will reap a tithe its own.

Digitized by Google

Thus infant progress, holding out its arms
A-balance on the edge of pioneer-luck
Will find a safer footing on the wider ground
Whereon the ebb and flow of purpose makes
For gain and growth and consequence to all.
The times are ripe. The king would have the west
A harvest field of yielding enterprise,
With virtue seeding in the Church and State,
'Mid loyalty a-bloom in every heart.
And here I stand, his messenger and yours,
To implement the tidings far and wide,
Throughout this realm of vast resource,
As Monsieur Guers may formal now announce.

A French national air sung by all. M. GUERS *reads the King's Proclamation.*

CHAMPLAIN. These be the terms of mandate unconcealed;
And now the social may usurp the solemn,
While I present this lady here, a friend
Of yours and mine. Madame Champlain, my wife!
The neighbours in our western home, Helène!
You've heard me speak of Sieur Hebért before:
His house is on the hill. Madame Hebért
Has welcome in her eye for you, *ma chère,*
Betokening prize of friendship in the days
To come. Madame Couillard! What Guillaume's wife?
Ah, now 'tis bride to entertain a bride,
And make us feel at home. Madame Hebért,
I leave you with these ladies twain in charge
To blend the friendships of your kind, while I,
With your good husband's aid, Madame Couillard,

Digitized by Google

The staid Guillaume, your wisest choice of mate,
Seek out old comrades to enheart us all.

[*Huzzas from the settlers, and a pressing near for recognition.*

Merci, my friends, to one and all of you!
But there, the ship sends warning note
To bid us all on board, a blend of old
And new, to celebrate, rejoicing to rejoice,
In common plea around the festive board,
Quebec now come of age. List to the lads,
With lusty strain echoing the cannon's mirth!

SONG AND CHORUS.

Hey, ho, for the fêting, the grace and the greeting
Of France blessing those of her own!
Give way to the joying of kinship convoying
The coming of kinship's renown.

Refrain—

From the brooklet's fond glee to the far-swelling sea,
Our land claims the rights of the free.

All singing.

Hey, ho, for the gladness of hearts shrift of sadness,
Forgetting the days of lament!
Hey, ho, for the fêting, the grace and the greeting
Of France bringing gifts of content!

Refrain—

From the brooklet's fond glee to the far-swelling sea,
Our land is the land of the free!

Digitized by Google

[*The echo of the refrain is heard from the shore as if from a distance, and is taken up by the company on the stage, as the curtain falls on the last scene of the Second Act.*

From the brooklet's fond glee to the far-swelling sea,
New France is the home of the free.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

ACT III. SCENE I.

A room in the Habitation. CHAMPLAIN *and* MADAME CHAMPLAIN *seated at the breakfast table. The little Indian girls, Hope and Charity, whom* MADAME CHAMPLAIN *has adopted as the first-fruits of her mission school, are to be seen playing around the room at the close of the morning repast.*

CHAMPLAIN. The ideal and the real strange neighbours make:
The sordid and the false the latter heat
And scald its temper with discrepancies.
And you, alas, *ma chère,* have had brought home,
How far the twain of them do graze apart,
With little else for fodder save distrust.

MADAME C. The happiness that's real in these, my charge
In trust as if of God, brings no distrust
To my ideal of a mother's love;
Their happiness I share as looker-on.

CHAMPLAIN. Would there were innocence akin to such
In the outdoor restlessness 'tis mine to free
From trumpery jealousies of creed and trade

Digitized by Google

And ire of selfishness. This is no place,
I ween, where such as you should be—rough-housed
As if on camping-ground, though mettle-edged
To bear worse stress to come.

MADAME C. Nay, nay, to share
The straits my husband bears is fair divide,
As even Hope and Charity in play
Do oft illustrate in their give and take.
Their elders, too, though famished, often peer
Into my trinket looking-glass,[1] and read
Me heart's content, a-lessoned in their smile
And peace of mind, surmounting hardship's straints.

CHAMPLAIN. The smile and peace of mind, I trow, that comes
From thought of being in an angel's keep—
A peace of mind my own, whene'er I ruminate
On what you've left, to be with me and want.

MADAME C. Our table wears no sign of want as yet;
And, hap what may, our love will last awhile,
To brave the Company's lack of soul-regard.
The good old Pontgravé has sent supplies
From Tadousac; and, when the spring returns,
Our housing here, sore winter-weathered old,
Will do its own impleading as a suitor,
Claiming renewal.

CHAMPLAIN. When I think—

MADAME C. Ay, think
To think and discompose yourself o'er ills
That will undo themselves if let alone—

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN. Nay, while I think how hope gave impetus,
When Guers read earnest in the king's decree,
And we made garment of the worst to look
The best, amid the general merriment,
There is but shame and shivering from the rents
Ill faith has torn anew. 'Twas mine, by right
Of governor, to curb all lawlessness—
To lure the peltry pirates from their haunts,[2]
And give them chase and penalty;
But now the Viceroy, balking at the expense[3]
Of armament to make pursuit of them,
Has permit sanctioned, paramount to what
The king afore decreed. 'Twas yesternight
The news arrived from Tadousac. But why
Should I recount the plaints of state to one
The commonwealth has been at pains
To miss providing for with fit abode?
The record of its negligence is in these walls,
With chinks for commas in its rhetoric
And climax-pause in chateau still unbuilt.

MADAME C. The rivalry should breed more enterprise,
From which the colony may find relief.

CHAMPLAIN. The rivalry will breed disturbance first,
With me for umpire till the times are sane:
Alas, a thankless task, when ignorance reigns
A blinded partisan in hamlet or in kingdom.
Come hither, chits, and drive away dull care!
Your school hour's come, and I would hear you read,
If your protector—ay, and mine, Helène!—

Digitized by Google

Will ward you in your stumbling letter-gait.
I see you've been a-building, as I would be;
And so I kiss the angel-hand that showed
You how, as it would sweetly show me, too.
God bless it for the goodness! Hope, come here,
And sit upon my knee, while Charity,
Your sister, reads the words she has been taught,
As I am taught the lesson every day
That love begetteth patience.

While the lesson is proceeding, SIEUR HEBÉRT, *announced, appears and gives greeting.*

CHAMPLAIN. Ah, 'tis you,
Hebért: *pardonne,* the Procureur du Roi,
Save for the king's endorsement on the seal.[4]

HEBÉRT. *Excusez-moi,* madame: I did not think
To interrupt you *en famille.*

MADAME C. Nay, nay,
'Tis only lesson time, and I will take
The garden for its *désinance. 'Revoir,*
Messieurs. Come, children, let us read the sky!

HEBÉRT. 'Tis there where angels read: 'tis there, I trow,
Where you will meet in time my daughter Anne. [*Aside.*

CHAMPLAIN. Moonstruck by sunstroke from a matron's grace. [*Aside.*

Digitized by Google

So, ho, Hebért, you're pale as fear of death!
Whence comes that mixèd look? Is there more news?

HEBÉRT. Ah, *monsieur gouverneur,* there's naught but news—
The news the devil weaves on land and sea.
Poor Courseron, the constable,[5] is ill abed
From saving yesternight your cellar bins,
And after-stalking of the thieves athirst;
And now Beauchasse, the Company's clerk, comes home
At dawn from Tadousac, with all his goods
For barter still unmarketed; while he,
A-chattering in his teeth like chimpanzee
Pursued, declares aloud the Huguenots
Are on their way to seize Quebec and dump
It, neck and crop, into the Cul-de-Sac.

CHAMPLAIN. So, ho, neglect comes home to roost at last!
Who was't unstrung the poor man's rabbit nerves?

HEBÉRT. Captain Dumay and Monsieur Guers he met
Astream, armed to the hilt of their avowal,
With writ credentials from the viceroy-duke.

CHAMPLAIN. How was their vessel armed?

HEBÉRT. Ah, that, he says,
We'll know by noon, when it arrives in port.

CHAMPLAIN. Were there marines on board beside the crew?

HEBÉRT. He saw but three, he says.

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN. Ah, possibly
To vaunt their master's swagger! Did they deign
To tell his terror aught we do not know?

HEBÉRT. Were it not well that I should bring him here?

CHAMPLAIN. What, the wicked clerk?

HEBÉRT. The same; and on my way
I may catch glimpse of Monsieur Guers, and bring
Him, too, if he be moored at Storehouse Point.

CHAMPLAIN. The more of messengers you muster me,
The ampler will we know what to believe.
I thank you for your zeal, Hebért,
And will await the issue of your search.

[*Exit* SIEUR HEBÉRT.

CHAMPLAIN. Now comes the baking of a ducal dish,
That's like to be but humble pie for me.
There's in it promise of much pungency
Of spice, howe'er the ingredients prove as weak
Of nurture to the body politic
As heretofore. Alas, for us, Helène!
For you, the tender-reared in luxury,
But now a *chatelaine* whose chateau's yet
To build, while cruel ills are round agape
And howling in the neighbourhood, enough
To pale the bravery of love in both of us,
And breed in me despair! When I make count
Of my demands, promised yet unfulfilled,
And notch the years of unrequited toil—
Exploring, trading, warring, for the good

Digitized by Google

Of France, and what might come to pass in this
Her realm extended, there is nought for me,
Beyond the gifting of my poor assets
To what men call the law of compensation,
And then to watch its balance turn which way
It may, with no regard for me or mine.
Within the Stadacona woods, in view
Of every splendour of the landscape's face,
I once made solemn vow to sink all claims
For wealth my own in this new enterprise;
And I would keep that vow in sight of God
And man, even to a final make or spoil.
But what of my Helène? Through vow of mine,
Is she to suffer still, under the stress
Of broken faith and sordid negligence?
Now she is mine, 'tis vow aface of vow,
And I must make my choice. What then?
Shall I suggest that we go back to France,
Not to return until the *mauvaise foi*
Of things undone finds curative in sting
Of these new rivalries the duke sets up?
Would that be breaking of my vow, to save
My marriage vow? She would not go alone,
Nor would I send her thus. Yet must she away
From all this squalor of the pioneer life
That will not be outswept, say what one may.
I see her coming up the gangway yonder,
Now that Hebért is gone. Dare I discuss
What's in my mind, ere Guers has told me all?

Enter MADAME CHAMPLAIN.

Where have you left your romping charge, Helène?

Digitized by Google

MADAME C. They're in the garden, under Marie's wing,
Well warned of your *parterres,* till comes the snow
To ward them with its coat. The Sieur has gone!
What was the grief he seemed to carry round
With him, expressed so full in eye and mien?

CHAMPLAIN. 'Twas not in grief he came; but news he had
He thought were better mine.

MADAME C. But not for those,
Most staid of diplomats, who, womanlike,
A secret might divulge.

CHAMPLAIN. Nay nay, my queen
And gentle confidante! Since we were wed,
What secret have I ever kept from you,
But for your peace of mind, if even that?

MADAME C. Ha, ha, my loyalty, then neither you
Nor yet your joint conspirator did speak
Of me, when once my back was turned? Come, look
Me in the face, you wicked, wicked man,
And give respect to truth.

CHAMPLAIN. Nay not a word we spoke.

MADAME C. Nor thought of me?

CHAMPLAIN. Ah, that we had to do.
As who could well resist, seeing you pass,
Or as with me, thinking of love astep
With hardship, pleading sore your better luck,

Digitized by Google

MADAME C. Still harping on a string of minor key,
Because of me! My luck is yours, as yours
Is mine, as is our love, thus sealed as e'er
With kiss for kiss. What would my highness more?
I pray you, therefore, condescend to tell
Me why that good old man, le Sieur Hebért,
Made burden of solemnity just now,
When breaking in upon our breakfast hour.

CHAMPLAIN. So, ho, my Eve would make Edenic glee
By quizzing Adam into telling all
He knows beforehand of his coming fall.
Another Company has been formed,[6] Helène,
And Sieur Hebért confirms the anxious news.

MADAME C. If that be all there is to tell, what need
Have we to wring our hands? We knew as much
At breakfast time, and did not go to jail.
Yea, should this anxious fall of yours be worse
Than Adam's first, cannot my Adam take
His Eve away? Is there no other Eden
Wherein we two may hide, loving to live,
And living to love, with God not far away?

CHAMPLAIN. Ah, prophetess of hope and faith and love,
Give me your hand, and I will read you more!
All Adams have a conscience given them,
And so have I. Care you to hear what's on't,
As ballast to your winsome rhetoric?
I have a vow beyond my marriage vow.
Since e'er I saw Quebec, nature's *chef d'oeuvre*,
I've vowed to colonize a commonwealth,

Digitized by Google

With it in midst. Alas, affairs have gone
Amiss. You know the tale—a lingering tale—
A record of the dismal hailing hope,
With hope as far as ever from the loaning,
Beyond our call, thus wooing at the gate.
And now, my other conscience, truth's alarm,
What more is there to say? My secret's out.
My vow to build a city, listless scorned,
As are your tender needs, now stands aface
My vow of love, and challenges this problem:
How may our loves, a-seeing eye to eye,
A verdict give for conscience' sake,
With treason meditating further woe?
Where is this other Eden we may seek
A refuge yours, from hardships so severe?
What say you, dear Helène?

MADAME C. Samuel Champlain,
You've made a vow, and you must keep it;
And, what is more, my place is by your side
To help you keep it. Ah, I have read your heart;
And, since 'tis mine, the record of its throbs
I'll place in sanctuary for secular worship,
Should e'er you have your way. You would be rid
Of me, most wicked sir,—for love of me,
More wickedly you'd say! Come, let me see
Your lips! There is no lie on them; and so
I'll stay with you to kiss them. Nay, I'll stay
With you wherever you may be. You have a vow,
Most wicked sir, and so have I, and that's
The end of it. This is my Eden here,
Where is my heart; and you may tell your heart
And conscience so, and all the Sieur Hebérts

Digitized by Google

Of solemn mien this wicked world holds,
That this is my resolve.

[*Exit* MADAME CHAMPLAIN.

CHAMPLAIN. A heroine in sooth, as brave of will
As hero in the bitter battlefield!

ACT III. SCENE 2.

A room in the Habitation. SIEUR HEBÉRT, BEAUCHASSE, *and* MONSIEUR GUERS *awaiting* CHAMPLAIN'S *arrival. Enter* CHAMPLAIN.

CHAMPLAIN. *Merci,* my friend Hebért! You found your men?
Ah, Monsieur Guers, I bid you welcome back.
And you Beauchasse! My friend Hebért has told
Me of your coming. Pray be seated all!
You bring despatches from the other side?

M. GUERS. I have them here.

CHAMPLAIN. They have been spoken of,
Before they reach my hand. How happens this?

M. GUERS. No seal of them is broken.

CHAMPLAIN. True it is,
But how did leakage spring of their contents,
To force this gentleman, accredited
A servant of our Merchants' Company,
To cease his trading? Warrant he had from law
Not yet repealed—the law that's in my hand.

Digitized by Google

M. GUERS. We thought to do him favour as a friend,
Saving a friend expense.

BEAUCHASSE. Favour, forsooth,
By force of arms, with vested rights ignored!
What think you of a friendship,[7] when it points
A gun at you to pray you do its bidding?
Methinks, my Master Guers, you'd best revise
The holdings of your friendship, if you'd grasp
The purport of my protest. Monsieur Champlain,
We have our rights, as subjects of the king,
As you have yours. The law is in your hands,
By right our governor. Ay, Master Guers,
Is piracy a breach of law or not?
Answer me that, my hawk, and prick forthwith
Your thinking-pot a-boil, while I perforce
Make protest in my Company's name,[8] and call
You to account for aping war in times of peace.

M. GUERS. Your protest may have lighter weight, when once
These documents reveal the duke's desire
To balance self and duty. You have had
Your gains, Beauchasse, your bulging prices, too—
Grinding the poor down to their stocking feet,
And jeering at the outcry raised thereat.
Ha, ha, protest indeed! What have you done
To meet demands that were not dividends?
Ay, ay, Beauchasse, *toujours* Beauchasse! Know you
The doggerel of your hamlet fame? Perchance,
Couillard, the honest farmer on the hill,
And Abraham Martin of the fields beyond,[9]
May gleeful give your protest benefit

Digitized by Google

Of clergy, making gift of it in time
To men, as emblem of some fallen angel.

HEBÉRT. Guillaume Couillard is son-in-law of mine,
A decent man who hateth heat of words.

CHAMPLAIN. *Merci,* Hebért; there is no need for heat.
Messieurs, refrain; the Procureur du Roi
Rebukes you *á-propos:* the *amende* is due.
When justice comes our way, we then
Will know who's worthy praise or blame. Caën!
Who is this De Caën,[10] entitled Sieur,
Of whom these letters speak so confident?
You know him, Guers?

M. GUERS. Yea, and his nephew, too.

CHAMPLAIN. They are not really Huguenots?

M. GUERS. Whate'er their creed,
Expressed or understood, under the flag
Of France they trade, and that's enough for me:
The duke commends them, does he not?

CHAMPLAIN. Ay, so I see, as speaks the king of me,
With promises renewed of ships and arms.
Under the flag of France they trade! Mark that,
Beauchasse! Have you not done the same, boasting
Of some success? Again give ear, Beauchasse!
Is trading confiscation, nothing less?
If more or less what think you all of this?
This same Caën, Beauchasse, would have me seize
Your truck and give you nothing for't.[11] He says

Digitized by Google

You've failed of duty to this land and France,
And so say I,—lamentably failed;
But "Serve him right" ne'er justified decree
Of "I'm Sir Oracle," unless the king assents.
Therefore 'tis mine to await the king's commands
Directly sent. Nay, nay, I will not hang
You yet, Beauchasse, mad though the poor folk are
At your per cents. Let but the Company pay
Its lawful tithes to church and state, and I
Will stand them caution till the king forbids:
With me he's final arbiter.[12]

M. GUERS. And we?
What of our trading rights and merchandise?
Are we to have no bartering privilege
To save our wares from waste? Is it not ours
To buy and sell, as these declare in writ?

CHAMPLAIN. Nay, not so fast: the king controlleth all.
As yet these De Caëns are only known
From hearsay's nod, not from the king's decree.
'Tis patience fills the statesman's sail aport.
Send me your masters, Guers, and then I'll treat
As prudence prompts me, governor and man,
Even as the king would wish. Nor is there more
To say. 'Tis ours to obey the king and law.
The *contretemps* of making known the news
Contained in these despatches, Guers, has been
A grief to me. But for that, all heat
Had been avoided. *Au revoir,* Beauchasse,
Nor quarrel by the way. Le Sieur Hebért
And I will counsel take, and let you know

Digitized by Google

In time what lee ashore is safe retreat
For all of us. I would not keep you longer.

[*Exit* SIEUR HEBÉRT, BEAUCHASSE, *and* M. GUERS.

CHAMPLAIN (*alone*). Another blend of bitters—rivalries
Of creeds and trade, with greed and hate for spice!
Ha, ha, Helène, the scent of it defiance brings
Into my veins, with God and you for stay!
Yea, mix the ingredients: stir the bowl about:
I'll drink it to the dregs. Nor will the dregs
E'er touch your angel lips I prophesy,
Though love rebel to miss them.

ACT III. SCENE 3.

An open space adjoining the Habitation, now known as the Notre Dame Square or Market Place. Shouts from an approaching rabble. Enter the rabble, bearing with them an effigy of the clerk of the old Company. Great uproar and unrestrained indignation over the perfidies of the traders and their chief servant, BEAUCHASSE.

THE CROWD. *Beauchasse, toujours Beauchasse,*[18] *Beauchasse à bas!*

All singing.

Hang him first and burn him after,
À bas Beauchasse!
Give him naught but scorn and laughter,
À bas Beauchasse!

Digitized by Google

Our bones he's bled till there's no bleeding,
Now we'll thrash him, no one heeding,
Treating him with ample kneading,
Toujours Beauchasse, à bas!

ONE RIOTER. Ho, fellows, there! The rascal, give him rope!
We'll make a fire with every chip at hand:
We'll toast him, roast him, trussed in every limb
From back to belly bursting rim to brim.

THE CROWD. *Beauchasse, toujours Beauchasse, Beauchasse à bas!*

SECOND RIOTER. He's had his day—a cruel day—the dog!
Now toothless, blind, and sodden in his spite,
No more his *sous per sous* will run the rig;
Nay, not an ounce of mercy to the prig,
He's been an eyesore to the colony.

THE CROWD. *Beauchasse, toujours Beauchasse, Beauchasse à bas!*

All singing again.

Lift him high upon our shoulders,
À bas Beauchasse!
Spectacle to all beholders,
À bas Beauchasse!
Around and round him send a-swinging,
Toss him arms and legs a-flinging,
Overhead behold him winging,
Toujours Beauchasse à bas!

Digitized by Google

THIRD RIOTER. Ho, there, *mes enfants,* let's procession form!
See where the smoke arises from the shore!
Thither let's march, and finish him with fire,
A-scorching out his sins on funeral pyre!

All singing again.

Lay him low upon the shutter,
À bas Beauchasse!
Hist, let no one cheep or mutter,
À bas Beauchasse!
He's been a monster sowing trouble,
Charging what he liked, and double;
Now he's but a bag of stubble,
Toujours Beauchasse à bas!

[*Exit the rabble, continuing to shout on their march, Beauchasse, toujours Beauchasse, Beauchasse à bas!*

Enter HEBÉRT, COURSERON *the Constable, and* GUILLAUME COUILLARD.

HEBÉRT. This is strange heating on the king's domain,
With penury agog to have its rights:
I had no thought these gamins had a soul.

COUILLARD. Beauchasse, you thought, perhaps, had none to spare.
And hence could not supply demand, at twice
The legal price.

COURSERON. We will be blamed for this.

Digitized by Google

HEBÉRT. Be blamed for what, and why? Who dare will say
That we have ever made, as pioneers,
Foment of enmity? Nay, rather, have we not allayed
The outcry of the poor by giving what
We could from out our stores, when this Beauchasse
Had stayed his niggard hand from helping them?

COURSERON. Yet we had better not be seen to-night.

COUILLARD. We may not even soon be heard, I judge,
Amid the vocal din now in pursuit.
Listen! A counter blast is in the wind,
Though not in song: Beauchasse, I wager, is
Not far away: let us withdraw a bit!

[*Exit* HEBÉRT, COURSERON, *and* COUILLARD, *as a counter rabble enters, headed by* BEAUCHASSE, *the clerk of the Company.*

BEAUCHASSE. These devil's dead-heads have been here, I see.
I hear they have an effigy of me to burn.
I'll burn them! If 'tis insult they're about.
I know full well whence comes that phrase of theirs:
Guillaume Couillard, I'll have it out with you—

Enter GUILLAUME COUILLARD, *alone.*

COUILLARD. Methinks I heard my name pronounced aloud:
Was't you, Beauchasse, that called? How strange it is
That I am near to answer you! What is't
You want of me?

Digitized by Google

BEAUCHASSE. Are you of these?

COUILLARD. Of whom?

BEAUCHASSE. Ah, well you know of whom, Guillaume Couillard:
These *canaille* who think this De Caën
Has found decree to give my men their *congé,*
And now rejoice beforehand over them.

COUILLARD. These *canaille,* in sooth! 'Tis case of dog
A-smelling dog, perchance; and, if your sense
Of smell be dulled, goodman, your other sense
Of hearing might make out what 'tis you seek.
Give heed! I'm told they have a pretty song
To guide you where they are. Nay, do not go:
I'll hold you while they sing, and let you have it out
With me, as you have lately wished.

BEAUCHASSE. Beware,
Couillard; 'tis not that I'm afraid of you,
But—

COUILLARD. Yea, I knew you'd stay, whene'er my hands
Lay gently on your shoulders. Ay, the edge
Is better! Come, and we will hear it out.
Ah, now they start, and we'll await *le fin.*

The Rioters heard singing in the distance.

Sprinkle round his stinking ashes,
À bas Beauchasse!
Where the tidal water splashes,
À bas Beauchasse!

Digitized by Google

His masters are not ours for longer,
And Quebec will be the stronger
For the missing of the monger,
Toujours Beauchasse à bas!

THE CROWD. *Beauchasse, toujours Beauchasse, Beauchasse à bas!*

COUILLARD. There now, my friend, the pretty song is sung,
And you may scent the dogs with my consent.
But in their presence do not call them dogs
Or they may lay their teeth in rage on you,
Not gently as I laid my hands just now
To let you have it out with me.

BEAUCHASSE (*freeing himself*). As I will yet,
With you and your foul revellers yonder,
Whose livers I'd have shred in small, to feed
The eels they have to feed upon. Come on,
Ye gawks, nor stand a-gaping there! Perchance,
These ventral fins that flap disturbance near,
To fan the fame of De Caën, may stand
A further clipping at your frugal hands,
Before the year is out or he gets here.
Come, let us run the doggerel dogfish down,
Ere they can, singing, flap their tails again.

[*Exit* BEAUCHASSE *and his partizans. Re-enter* HEBÉRT *and* COURSERON.

HEBÉRT. Guillaume, my man, you should be constable:
'Twas quietly done, and better than a play

Digitized by Google

To see the coward tremble to his boots.
I do begin to hate the man.

COURSERON. Think you
He will come back? He ought to be arrested.

HEBÉRT. Then who, my *brave,* but you must after him,
Before he reach the rabble with his *braves?*
They'll kill him as they would a noisome cat
A-mewing all for nought, and then we'll have
The contract on our hands to hang them all.

COURSERON. Good heavens! Must I after them alone?

COUILLARD. Nay, Courseron, this thing is not a joke,
Although it was a joke for me to feel
The poltroon quiver when they sang his death.
Events are hastening in this direful hole
From bad to worse. Death satirized, as thus
It has this night, will kindle strife prolonged,
Which, reaching English ears, may well excite
Cupidity of race to heat of war.
This Company—

HEBÉRT. Which one, *beau-fils?*

COUILLARD. The one
Which has Beauchasse, its old man of the sea,
Around its neck. This Company has friends
In France—the king himself for one, perhaps,
And Pontgravé another.

HEBÉRT. Pontgravé,
The governor's bosom friend?

Digitized by Google

COUILLARD. Yea, verily:
I have been told that yestermorn he moored
Near by the Saguenay's mouth, with sixty men
Or more on board his ship, to assert
His Company's claims.

HEBÉRT. Against the De Caëns?

COUILLARD. Nay, rather, these opposing, as if the world
Were theirs, to train it Huguenot in trade.

HEBÉRT. How came you by the news? Does Champlain know?

COUILLARD. An hour ago I chanced to meet Dumay
A-hastening from the *Habitation*
Back to his ship. He had just come from Tadousac.
But for the din I would have told you sooner.

HEBÉRT. Sooner you should have whispered me, the din
Or none. This is most serious news. I must
Away at once to see the governor.
Ha, what is that?

COUILLARD. Methinks the *canaille*
Have caught their cat and drag him by the tail
To where they hanged his double. Ha, hear that!
He scratches back; nay, they have him by the claws,
For hear again their cry victorious.

THE CROWD. We have him now; ha, ha, we have him now!
Beauchasse, toujours Beauchasse, Beauchasse à bas!

Digitized by Google

COUILLARD. I swear me, bloodshed's in that cry for you,
Beauchasse, unless we rescue make by force
Of arms or strategy. A minute: I'll be back!

COURSERON. Come, Sieur Hebért, let's hasten hence at once:
Vite, vite, the *Habitation* is near.

COUILLARD (*returning*). Nay, Courseron, your place is here with me,
My hand a-steadying you as late it did
Beauchasse. You know how valiant he can be,
And I must have one *brave* to help me meet him.

COURSERON. But Sieur Hebért they'll meet—

COUILLARD. *Beau-père* Hebért will find his way alone.
Stand, therefore, firm with me for seizure's sake,
As any brave Lieutenant du Prevost,
In times of opportunity. Stand fast,
Here in the nearest shade, to await events.
Ha, here they come!

The rabble re-enter, two of the rioters dragging BEAUCHASSE, *all dishevelled, to the centre of the stage, a few of them with torches in their hands, plucked from the funeral pyre of* BEAUCHASSE'S *effigy.* BEAUCHASSE'S *partizans are heard approaching to his rescue. The din from all sides is deafening. A free fight is imminent.*

Digitized by Google

The Rioters sing again.

We have him now, the devil's chicken,
À bas Beauchasse!

COUILLARD. Ha, ha, new words they chance have found,
Their doggerel piecing out to fit the tune.

Fit for devil's broth to thicken,
À bas Beauchasse!
Now you feel of death the shiver,
Cent per cent must go for ever,
As the goods we now deliver,
Toujours Beauchasse à bas!

THE CROWD. *Beauchasse, toujours Beauchasse, Beauchasse à bas!*

Amid the confusion an attempt is made to rescue BEAUCHASSE. *The riot rages for a time, when all at once* CHAMPLAIN, *with* HEBÉRT *and* COUILLARD *on either side of him, appears amid the turmoil, and just as suddenly a solemn silence reigns.*

CHAMPLAIN. Ho, one of you release my friend Beauchasse!

COURSERON. Of course I will.

CHAMPLAIN. Nay, Couillard here
Will see to it.

COURSERON. I knew we would be blamed.

[BEAUCHASSE *is released.*

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN. Ay, well you may. This is a sorry sight—
A deviltry to be condemned, contemned,
And punished rigorously. I overheard
But thought you were but roistering in sport.
You have been twisting rumours into facts.
But rumours are not facts. Hie to your huts!
For me, I give assurance to investigate
This outrage, building judgment on the facts
And not on rumours. As concerning what
The king may have decreed, we'll know in time,
And in convention enter protest meek,
As is becoming loyal subjects all.
Meantime, to bed in peace! The *Habitation*
Is under arms, and know you once for all
That I am governor here. I will with you,
Hebért, and you, Couillard. Nay, Courseron,
I leave you with these others.

ACT III. SCENE 4.

The glebe and garden of the Recollets, with their monastery in the rear, and on the banks of the stream which they had renamed the St. Charles. The members of the brotherhood and their servants are seen busy planting and pruning. Two of them converse apart concerning the affairs of the colony.

FIRST BROTHER. This coming of the Huguenots to trade
Is not in keeping with the hopes we had,

Digitized by Google

That ne'er a heretic, with tares to sow,
Would have a place in Canada. The king,
'Tis said, has writ Champlain to keep his eye
On all suspects, nor let them sojourn here.

SECOND BROTHER. The king is orthodox enough, we know;
But what of that, when promises of arms
Are all he sends[14] to keep us orthodox?
Champlain, I trow, is at the edge of things,
As was the poor Beauchasse the other night.

FIRST B. That was a devil's dance, in very sooth—
A touch-and-go to set us all aflame:
And who can tell when we will have to serve
A-soldiering, as did these henchermen of ours[15]
A week ago?

SECOND B. They say that Pontgravé
Has men and arms galore to gain his end.

FIRST B. As have these De Caëns, the Huguenots,
To masculate their Company.

SECOND B. And poor Champlain?

FIRST B. Ah, he! a rusty arquebuse or two:
In loopholes rich, but passing poor in powder!

SECOND B. 'Tis, then, a civil war we have on hand,
Bringing its bloodshed to our very door,
Perchance yet staining these our very hands,
Should Champlain interfere. What could be worse?

FIRST B. There is a saving clause to all of that.

Digitized by Google

SECOND B. A saving clause for us?

FIRST B. Yea, of a truth
For us, the soldiers of the Cross.

SECOND B. Explain,

FIRST B. The invaders are both Huguenots; and, lose
Who may, the victory comes to us.

SECOND B. Merci,
And so they are: both surely Huguenots
And heretics. I had not thought of that.
These De Caëns alone were in my mind.
But Pontgravé! Ah, he! The good old man!
So brave and brusquely kind of manner, too!
Who ever heard that he had tares to sow?
Don't you remember how 'twas he who brought
Us out aship to join the Mission here?
Nor yet forget how once he saved from death
That sailor lad, and nursed him dry and warm
All of a livelong day within his cabin?
How calmly kind of him! How genuine
His charity! Was it his heresy
That taught him thus to act? If it be so,
I'm heretic enough myself to wish
That more such heresy were all around.
Besides, a heretic or not, we know
He's Champlain's friend—his trusty bosom friend;
And are the friends of Champlain ever seen
To wean themselves from us on his advice,
Howe'er we priests regret his marriage day?
No, Pontgravé is Champlain's friend, and we,

Digitized by Google

Though churchmen leal, would weep to see
The dear old mariner maimed in limb and purse,
Other than now. Free of our gaberdine,
We monks have ta'en our place in battlefield,
And won a victory, too, by choosing sides;
And, if the governor demands—

FIRST B. 'Tis well you're not the governor yourself,
To rush between the combatants and singe
Your auspices. The king is orthodox,
But sends Champlain no ready fighting gear;
While you, as reft of fighting gear as he,
And orthodox besides, would fain enlist,
An instant soldier proud to save a heretic.
The governor is made of cooler stuff than you;
And well it is, perchance, for us and him
That he should neutral be, until the king
Gives better heed to all of us. Ah, here
Comes Father George, the wisest of our house,
As Champlain thinks, when he goes out to hunt
The counsel of the wise. He's not alone,
And we must to our task and let him pass,
Though sore I long to ask him his advice
Concerning what we have been talking of.
Hist, Brother Jean, look not this way just now:
'Tis he and she in very sooth—Champlain,
Accompanied by his Huguenot wife.

SECOND B. She's Huguenot no longer.

FIRST B. That's as you
May say; but not as others think.

SECOND B. Now, now,

Digitized by Google

I know in point what means the ungentle phrase:
A name is dog enough to tabulate
A virtue vice, and snarl at the lie.

MADAME CHAMPLAIN *has with her her two Indian protégés, Hope and Charity; while accompanying* FATHER GEORGE *is to be seen the Huron boy afterwards known as Louis de Sainte-Foye. Several Indian women stand near to watch the three children play under the motherly supervision of* MADAME CHAMPLAIN, *while the monks and their servants, scattered over the grounds, are busy with their gardening.*

CHAMPLAIN. Your garden rivals Sieur Hebért's and mine.
Ah, Father George, 'twould be a pride to envy
Were there more rivals in the field. But crops
Come not from weather-chiding. Frowning fate
Refuses quickening at the will of man.
Yet man oft challenges the frown to smile,
By taking counsel with a friend. Elsewhere
Are rivals twain afield, with me a third
And arbiter; and I would have you piece
My judgment out, as would a friend a friend's.
You've heard how Pontgravé and De Caën
Are rivals face to face at Tadousac,
With prestigé at their backs to seize amain,
For either, all there is of trading rights
Within this vast domain. To me the king
Has given the overseeing of the realm,
With no resource coercive. Men nor arms

Digitized by Google

Are mine; and law, you know, has lost its edge
When impotency holds the blade in hand.
My problem, therefore, is how I may give
It edge and force, wooing this rivalry
To join with me in my fond game of progress.
What says good Father George, my counsellor
And friend, to such a plea?

FATHER G. My heart, Champlain,
Is with you in your toilings for us all.
Your cause is ours. Our energies are yours,
To implement the unity and zeal
Of righteousness in church and state affairs;
And I, for one, am ready to enhance
The authority of your rule by word and deed,
If you but show the way. What would you more?

CHAMPLAIN. The fort is not yet built; and we should have
Some show of force to stay these rivals' wrath,
Until the king's decree is in my hands.
The De Caëns are armed, and we are not;
And that's the nutshell I must crack at once.

FATHER. G. But Pontgravé is armed as well, and he—
Is he not still your friend?

CHAMPLAIN. He was, and still
May be, as was he, ay, and still must be
The upholder of his Company's vested rights.
He is the second kernel in the shell
'Tis mine to crack, without the force to crack it.

Digitized by Google

FATHER G. Ah, now I see the issue in its breadth:
From priest to pioneer, we all must stand by you;
As one we must. What of this rabble stir?
Beauchasse's anger, is it still aflame?
Ah, you must see to that; then I'll bespeak
My brother monks to give you their support;
Nay, I will call them hither, now you're here:
Brother Jean, a word with you!

A message having been hastily sent around the garden, the Recollets and their servants crowd near CHAMPLAIN *and* FATHER GEORGE. MADAME CHAMPLAIN, *holding Hope and Charity by the hand, takes up her position at her husband's side, the Indian women following her to touch her dress and steal a peep at themselves in the ornamental looking-glass hanging at her side.*

FATHER G. Attend!
The governor would have a word with you!
His theme is of ourselves, and that should make
Us listen with our hands behind our ears.

The Monks chant obedience with bowed heads.

Give God the glory, we will hear him,
Hear him as we all would say,
Greet him servant of the king.

CHAMPLAIN. When common danger saps our peace of mind,
Man unto man, we make our fellows strong.
Ev'n men of peace must make the cause their own,

Digitized by Google

Which seeks to rectify the affairs of state.
Whate'er we have, as subjects of the king—
Ev'n a foothold barely—ours it is
To guard. Here in Quebec our lot is cast:
God and the king have given it to us,
And we must hold it in the name of both,
Until they tell us they will none of it.

The Monks chant response.

Give God the glory, turn we never
From the task we've taken up,
Servants of our God and king.

CHAMPLAIN. Around these woods and far beyond, we know
What realm there is for us throughout it all.

[*The Monks murmur applause.*

You've taken up your task, ordained of God,
As I have mine, the appointed of the king.
Our hands are on the plow, and who will say
To us, Turn back?

The Monks chant response.

Give God the glory, we will hold it,
Hold it as a sacred trust,
Servants of our God and king.

CHAMPLAIN. No one, you solemn say;
Not Father George, your friend and mine, nor I,
Nor yet these innocents of Huron blood,

Digitized by Google

Forerunners of a best posterity
Which they may live to see and bless!

The Monks join in a full chant.

'Tis ours to face the coming of a brighter day,
To heighten courage from the tempered air,
To claim our own from every fruitful shower,
To glory in the greatness of the land,
As God would have us in the king's good name!

Enter a messenger from the Habitation, with a letter in his hand for CHAMPLAIN.

CHAMPLAIN. Ah, this explains, my friends, what I have pled.
The crisis is at hand. A sail is near,
And I must haste away to find it foe
Or friend, with all of you near-by to uphold
Your governor in his time of need. I leave
In Father George's hands this message here,
Which will explain, to show you what's the need
For haste and instant action.

The Monks chant acceptance of the trust.

Give God the glory, turn we will not
From the task we've taken up,
Servants of our God and king.

Digitized by Google

ACT III. SCENE 5.

A room in the Habitation. CHAMPLAIN *and* MADAME CHAMPLAIN *in conversation, awaiting the arrival of* PONTGRAVÉ, *under the escort of* FATHER GEORGE *and* MONSIEUR GUERS.

MADAME C. Man magnifies the shadows of his day,
As if his night were not enough for him.

CHAMPLAIN. And women are the sun's *filleules*,[16] with rays
Of hope for all such gropers in the dark.

MADAME C. Be that as sand-blind men applaud, I long,
Outside this stir of hasty armament,
To welcome good old Pontgravé once more,
As friend meets friend, with sunshine void of shadow.

CHAMPLAIN. I join with you, Helène; I long likewise.
The mariner indeed is true as steel;
But what if, in pursuit, rage unrestrained,
Sieur de Caën should seek a welcome too?

MADAME C. Name not the man a-paired with Pontgravé:
I would not have him in my house.

CHAMPLAIN. Dislikes
And likes repeat themselves in wives,
And I, your husband, combat not myself,

Digitized by Google

In what you say. But, dearest monitress,
What would you say were he, your friend and mine,
Our Pontgravé, to draw the sword on us?

MADAME C. What would I say? As well may I inquire
What you would say, were I, your wife, to raise revolt
Or run away. I pray you, *monsieur* mine,
Incage your queries as a wise man does,
Nor let them wire so close to raillery:
The one may happen when the other does.

CHAMPLAIN. Were you to run away, *madame ma chère,*
Then surely would I tandem it for you,
With vow for vow in harness.

MADAME C. What! and ditch
Your vow—one or the other—should to France
We run? Nay, rather let us chart these clouds
Of yours—these present clouds: the wisdom gained
May help us navigate the after-dark,
While reining in a runaway of vows.
But what has this with Pontgravé, my dear?
He comes in peace or war—in peace and love
I say, as is his wont. But De Caën!
If I mistake not, he has ruder aims.

CHAMPLAIN. Your repartee, my wisdom's better-half,
I hold in gentle part, and humbly take
My punishment a-sunshined by your smile.
Some interim settlement is in the wind,

Digitized by Google

As claimed these supercargoes[17] here last week.
The duke is on the halt again, unhinged
By protest from the Company. Alas, how oft
The faithless crave, and win in time, the crown
Of martyrdom—

MADAME C. As we may have to do,
Should these stock steeds of ours, our vows, involve
Capsize and sorrow in the after-dark.

CHAMPLAIN. That after-dark, where'er it be for us,
Has had its twilight prelude here for you.

MADAME C. Nay, nay, no more of that. Have you not said
I am the sun's *filleule,* with golden darts
Inside my quiver? Rays of hope! Are they
All spent? Then I must hie me to the hill
To gather more, when Pontgravé arrives.
Ah, here comes Monsieur Guers! *Retirez-moi?*

CHAMPLAIN. Nay, stay, Helène, and hear what news he brings.

Enter M. GUERS.

Has Pontgravé arrived?

GUERS. He has, *monsieur.*
Pardonne, madame! He recommends himself
To you—to both of you—and presently
He will be here with Father George.[18]

CHAMPLAIN. His ship—

Digitized by Google

GUERS. He has no ship—only a schooner's load
Of merchandise.

[MADAME C. *exchanges looks with her husband quizzingly.*

CHAMPLAIN. You say he comes at once?

GUERS. Ay, with Father George;
And now I'll haste to tell him he may come.

[*Exit* M. GUERS.

MADAME CHAMPLAIN *approaches* CHAMPLAIN, *and, placing her hand playfully on his arm, recites these impromptu lines:*

A prophet and a prophetess
Once made a guess,
A counter guess:
The prophet ominous did speak,
The prophetess replied;
And now the sequel proves the freak
That neither of them lied.

CHAMPLAIN. Ha, ha, Helène, your muse is wondrous kind;
I wonder if my torpid top could find
A right retort that sags not in its wind.

A prophetess both good and true,
A prophet knew,
A lover knew:

Digitized by Google

The prophetess looked in his face,
The prophet kissed her eyes;
And still the marvel grows apace
How love can sacrifice.

MADAME C. Within that after-dark of yours, such darts
As these may scintillate a spark or two
Across the ditch, to keep these steeds of ours
From foundering on their way. But friendship comes
To brighten up our present.

Enter FATHER GEORGE *and* PONTGRAVÉ. *Friendly greetings interchanged.*

PONTGRAVÉ. All is well:
To God the praise! But why this war array
Of stalking sentinel and port-hole frown?
Was it a foe you thought to see in me?
Nay, nay, I'm still a trader's hack. My ship
Lies peaceful armed at Tadousac,
Pending emergency. I'm only here
To buy and sell, not to defy, with show
Of arms, my governor and friend.

CHAMPLAIN. 'Tis well,
As you have said; but De Caën is fully armed.

PONTGRAVÉ. Ay, armed to truculence.[19]

CHAMPLAIN. And you are here?

PONTGRAVÉ. The agent of my Company, compelled
To trade, till urgent fighting comes my way!

Digitized by Google

If De Caën has warrant 'gainst my ship
And you, my higher arbiter, demand
Its fair surrender, who am I, to spite
The law? But should you say him nay,
Then all the deviltry at fraud's command,
Or sneak-thief's engineering, will not stay
My temper to resist and hold mine own.

CHAMPLAIN. Your Company's rights are forfeit to the king.[20]
Their charter's but a worthless piece of paper;
And I, perforce, have seized their property
In trust, until they implement their faith
To this poor colony.

PONTGRAVÉ. Justice is just,
And I am but its call-boy. Leniency
Is more or less its running handmaid, too,
Should rivalry be leering round the corner,
To steal more than its share. Hold what you have
A guarantee, that henceforth trading greed
Will not play false the pioneer's zeal.
Impartial you have been, impartial be.
These De Caëns, our rivals, who are they?
You know the "has been," but the "will be" waits
The test of time. And, did I dare to woo
The gift of prophecy, I might detect the bad
Developing a worse, ay, even its worst,
In penury again begot unblushingly
Of tyrannous neglect and heartlessness.
These gentry are not built benevolent,
No more than gamblers are.

Digitized by Google

MADAME C. 'Tis not for me
To interrupt, but, François Pontgravé,
Prophet of evil, yea, my friend and ours,
Fain would I exorcise the croak of crow
Out of your prophecy with housewife cheer.
Let me retire to seek your better angel.
And Father George, these *messieurs* keep apart
Till I return.

[*Exit* MADAME CHAMPLAIN.

FATHER G. The king must send decree.

CHAMPLAIN. And we must leave at once for Tadousac.

PONTGRAVÉ. Sieur de Caën would have you there?

CHAMPLAIN. He would,
And yet he wouldn't: he'd rather have your ship.

PONTGRAVÉ. Then let him burn his fingers taking it.
But that the cunning fox will hardly chance,
Without a guaranty secured from you. He knows
He's not supreme out here, and that is gall
To beggars cock-a-ride as he.

CHAMPLAIN. Your papers,
Are these *en regle?*

PONTGRAVÉ. Yea, neat and formal cut
As lawyer's gown. Here they are complete.

Digitized by Google

[MADAME CHAMPLAIN *returns with refreshments.* FATHER GEORGE *and* PONTGRAVÉ *busy themselves as her attendants, while* CHAMPLAIN *reads the clearance papers of* PONTGRAVÉ'S *vessel.*

CHAMPLAIN. Where is the Company's permit?

PONTGRAVÉ. Here it is,
Writ crookèd in my humble *personnel,*
As witnessed by *madame* and Father George.

CHAMPLAIN. I mean the permit De Caën must grant,
In name of this new chartered Company,
To every ship now sailing here from France?

PONTGRAVÉ. What done with it?
Nought have I done with it. I never had it.
The De Caëns are not my masters here,
Since you are governor.

CHAMPLAIN. This is, alas,
No laughing matter.

PONTGRAVÉ. Why, the law's demands
I saw to, and the papers all are there.
What would you more? Am I to lose my ship
For lack of rival's etiquette?

CHAMPLAIN. You may.

PONTGRAVÉ. With you for arbiter-in-chief and friend?
If that be justice, fight we must for other!

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN. Fighting the law even for the best of friends,
Is no safe game for one to consort with,
Far less a governor, in straits like mine.
I have a wife, and here is Father George;
Surely amongst us, friend to friend assured,
We may discern what 'tis the best to do.
Come, Father George, what of advice is yours
To give, to save this worthy mariner?

FATHER G. The hostess first and then the guest! *Madame,*
What say you? Shall we to Tadousac,
To void the *contretemps?*

MADAME C. Woman's place
Is in her home. 'Tis there is heard her voice
To best effect, a second in command.
There, with her husband and her inner heart,
She may commune on what concerns her friends—
Even con at times the links of sympathy
Within the public weal. My outer task
Has been to join with Father George's kind,
In making some impress upon the souls
So long asleep in ignorance from lack
Of gospel light. Alas, the task! To me
It seems at times but labour lost—the seed
A-rotting ere it fructifies, or worse,
A-withering just before it ripens full.
And, as with us poor gospel pioneers,
So 'tis with you, the men of other brawn:
You have your toilings still to wonder at,

Digitized by Google

With further toils in hand. Year in, year out,
You overtop the hedges round your pride,
To see what may be done, without the power
To do it. You long to make things plumb,
And mourn to find them still aslant,
As if the plummet were no implement
Of nature's make. What is this gospel men
Would preach and preach, despite the scorn?
What is this climbing 'yond ambition's reach,
Nathless the loss of strength and peace of mind?
'Tis mine to hate but what my husband hates—
If e'er I suffer him to hate for long—
When rivalries arise beyond the realm
Of housewife ken. My function is to love,
And, void of lust, all love is paired with justice.
Therefore were I to accept this challenge yours,—
Yours, Father George, and yours the twain of you—
The simple verdict I would give in trust
To all of you is this: Do right and go!

FATHER G. *Merci, madame,* and so say I with you.
In such a case as this justice must hold:
To do the right is but to stay the hand
Of him who would injustice do.

PONTGRAVÉ. *Madame,*
I've known for long that this old heart of mine
Is true to me, whene'er I think of you.
The gospel of your presence is a toast
We three will drink in silence. Gentlemen,
Your glasses I would touch. Madame Champlain!
God bless her in her now and evermore!

Digitized by Google

ACT III. SCENE 6.

On board DE CAEN'S *vessel at Tadousac.* SIEUR DE CAEN *and his nephew,* EMERY DE CAEN, *awaiting the arrival of* CHAMPLAIN *and* FATHER GEORGE *to discuss the disposal of* PONTGRAVÉ'S *ship.*

SIEUR DE C. This would-be monarch needs his pinions cropped:
His mien is more majestic than his sway:
An Eastern potentate could loom no larger.

EMERY DE C. I hope you spoke him fair.

SIEUR DE C. Beyond deserving:
I told him that my purpose was to seize.

EMERY DE C. And he?

SIEUR DE C. He donned his prestige on his sleeve,
His pride upon his hat, and proudly asked
To see my papers.

EMERY DE C. Which aroused your wrath
And made you show your hand?

SIEUR DE C. What do you mean?
I did not show my hand. I gave him nay—
Or rather bade him sue the duke to give
Him warranty to flirt with secrecies:[21]
Nay, more, I pricked his dignity so far
As gain his promise to attend me here.

Digitized by Google

EMERY DE C. What easing to a poor man's spleen
was that—
Wooing to win his high-strung mightiness
To board our humble ship! Twice has he turned
The edge of our complacency,[22] only
To rag his wounded dignity the more,
As things turn out. Is that the lap of oar?
Yea, here he comes in schooner's wherry,
Backgrounded by his rough-robed Recollet!
The ladder lower, lads! Give way! Give way!

Enter CHAMPLAIN *and* FATHER GEORGE. *Greetings coldly interchanged.*

CHAMPLAIN. I would not have you think, Sieur de
Caën,
That I am here to pander for injustice.
Two sides there are to every plea, they say,
But mine has only one.

SIEUR DE C. My plea is likewise plain,
Whatever yours may be. The ship is confiscate,
And I would have it, by the right of law,
To ferret out these thieves of Rochellois,
Who make a warren of our peltry pòrts
And nibble up our gains.

CHAMPLAIN. I hold in lien
The chattels of the guild you'd supersede,
And, come what may, you have redress assured.

SIEUR DE C. But not the ship, equipped to make pur-
suit
Of those the law should heel in our behalf.

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN. Have you no runners of your own outrig
To put in chase?

SIEUR DE C. We have; but what of that?
This ship we want will give *éclat* to those we have.

CHAMPLAIN. Then take the craft, and arm it *cap-a-pie,*
And I will take command of it.[28]

SIEUR DE C. Nay, nay,
Brave Governor! Sieur de Caën comes not
To Canada to throw away his gold
On high exploits: he comes to gather more.
My rights I know: your claims I would respect
As words our written charter. Hear me, then!
This ship is ours by breach of law; and so
'Tis mine to seize it. There the matter ends.

CHAMPLAIN. Ay, ends, perchance, for you, but not with me!
The king's decree is paramount.

SIEUR DE C. The viceroy's voice
Is clamant till the king's decree is heard.
And if 'tis treason you would hunt, look back
Upon the record of our rivals compromised,
Whose interests you uphold.

CHAMPLAIN. I uphold the right,
And it alone.

SIEUR DE C. This Pontgravé 's your friend?

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN. And would be yours did you but know
him well.

SIEUR DE C. He stands a partizan alarmed.

CHAMPLAIN. You know
Him poorly when you say't. No man has more
Of honour in his gift or bravery.
Loyal to law and justice, bowing to both,
He holds his ship to place at your disposal,
Whene'er your claim's unchallenged. So with me,
I am not here to plead for more than justice.

SIEUR DE C. Then justice you will have; ay, more of
it
Than these our predecessors gave. Unbend,
To cauterize your wormed authority.
You have nor men nor arms. Your colony
Is at starvation's edge, with worse to come.
Faction is rife, with order in suspense.
Your fort is still to build; and, what is more,
There comes report that Ventadour will take
His uncle's place, should this unrest hold out,
And flood the land with Loyola's resolute scouts.
What, then, will hap to you—with companies twain
Making of trade a war—with strife of sect
A-rage from port to port, straining its spite—
With parasite and partizan nursing despair—
With Huguenot and Jesuit inflamed[24]
To make a folly of each other's faith?
You read my prophecy?

CHAMPLAIN. I hear your words
Assaying what may come. But to our text!

Digitized by Google

SIEUR DE C. Then listen to both text and homily!
This vessel I will have.

CHAMPLAIN. Whate'er the law?

SIEUR DE C. Meantime *la loi c'est moi.* And you the law
Will be, if but the twain of us should turn
Aside my prophecy. 'Tis yours to have
More than the semblancy of rule. Supply
Of arms and men should garrison your fort:
The place should be provisioned; and, to crown
Such governance by force, a fit abode
For you and yours, should substitute at once
The ruin you call a *Habitation.*

CHAMPLAIN. Much brighter than your prophecy is this,
Your promise of amend. Would that we knew
'Twould be fulfilled.

SIEUR DE C. To doubt is poor escape.
You're thinking of the monopolists who left
You in the lurch. My word is not as theirs.

CHAMPLAIN. Tempting is worse than doubting, and I fear
For others, not myself, as I withstand
The tempter. Prophecy may be a threat
To weaklings: not to me, howe'er I've read
Your horoscope my own before you did.
I would be friends with you, but not on terms
As these. The ship is yours by strength of threat.
Seize it you may, beyond my will. But still

Digitized by Google

The right of justice holds. Nay, do not think,
Sieur de Caën, that Champlain is a child.
You're here for gold, you say—gold for the sake
Of gold, not high exploits. But I am here
For these same high exploits: Yea, I am here
To found a commonwealth: not to be bought
Or sold for gold, or frightened from the path
Of honest dealing to the contract held.
Say, Father George, what's in your mind to say,
And let us hence with due respect.

FATHER GEORGE. In truth,
My pleading is no other than your own.
Sieur de Caën, were you to know, as we,
Our Pontgravé, his ship you would not keep,
As neither may you when you think of it.

[*Exit* CHAMPLAIN *and* FATHER GEORGE.

SIEUR DE C. Methought the starch went somewhat out of him,
When once he heard me promise on the fly.

EMERY DE C. Such promises are less expensive far,
When kept within the jar.

SIEUR DE C. Punning is worse than stale preserves, should one
Be out of butter.

EMERY DE C. Hence I'll say no more
To save the jar, the promise only broken.

SIEUR DE C. I'll break *le monsieur* yet.

Digitized by Google

EMERY DE C. Bend him, you mean:
He is no promise, as I take it, on the fly
That's likely to be broken.

ACT III. SCENE 7.

The garden attached to the Habitation. MADAME CHAMPLAIN *discovered in the moonlight all alone.*

MADAME C. Oh for a glimpse of what was once my home!
Forgotten? Nay, not yet, nor ever! See,
The moon is constant in her friendship still,
And speaks to me of France as chance it will
Of this, our poor old chateau, when I'm called
To think of it elsewhere. Ah, what is home?
A yonder, here, or only in the heart?
These nomads have a throbbing there, which reads
Them lesson at the gate ajar[25] for plea
Of gospel messenger. And, when my prayer
Receives a welcome from a mother's tears,
I know that home is there. God and friendship!
What other is there home may build upon?
Were mother earth, this moon is handmaid to,
A heart a-throb—a mother's heart in very truth—
With love for God and God as love supreme,
Then home would be wherever we should be,
And constancy its altar everywhere.

Digitized by Google

Enter CHAMPLAIN.

CHAMPLAIN. Ah, dear Helène, good news for you at last!
Tidings of import to the whole of us!
Come, then, my prophetess, and give again
Some token of your wondrous guessing gifts!

MADAME C. You would to France?

CHAMPLAIN. I would? Who told you so?

MADAME C. The moon and I have just been knitting brows,
To make the marvel out, before you came.

CHAMPLAIN. What, mooning of home to steal a march on me?
I should be jealous of the rivalry,
Since I was keen to break the news the first.
I wonder not that you should long for home,
Your home in France, since what is here for us
Is reft of comfort save what love has left.

MADAME C. But home is love and love is home; at least
So says the moon, if I made out aright
Her argument.

CHAMPLAIN. Spoke she of what your woes
Have been, and how your love has sanctified
The scene of them?

MADAME C. The moon no flatterer is;

Digitized by Google

Her charms shed soothing, as you see,
Bidding me patient wait your further tale.

CHAMPLAIN. Then listen; though you know the tale by heart.
This colony is but a crisis-bag,
Trade throating trade, and creed a-cursing creed,
With sordid passions slinking everywhere.
Beauchasse's cent-per-cent is out of date:
The poor will soon be mulcted for air to breathe,
With souls full steeped in idleness and guilt.
These De Caëns, embroiling and embroiled,
But make a play of compromise and craft,
As if all living were a gambling den,
The poor their counters, trading tricks
Their euchre code, the royal credit bluff.
There seems no ending to the deviltry,
Though Father George has been to France, to lay
Quebec's complaint before both duke and king.
Some show of progress there has been, but still
The game goes on. Memorials we send,[26]
And Pontgravé may plead; but what of that?
The gamesters ever trump our honest cards,
And there's the end of it, until I make
Appeal in person, as our friends agree.

MADAME C. And must you leave, with all your work on hand,
The fort and *Habitation* and all?

CHAMPLAIN. Hebért and Emery de Caën will see
To these.

MADAME C. And I?

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN. Ah, you, *ma chère!* What says
Your friend and *confidante,* the moon?

MADAME C. Oh, she!
The moon but talked of home.

CHAMPLAIN. And you would wish to see it. Ah, Helène,
The moonlight's in your eye, and I can see
The tell-tale joy you think you would suppress.
My wife, my all, my vow's delight and trust,
There's ecstasy for both of us in this,
My soul's decree to sail for France again—
Relief of mind for me, release for you
From hardship's luck—the ecstasy of love
And trust and joy, and all that's in the name
Of home. And here in presence of the moon—
The dear old moon, your friend and mine—we pledge
Our troth again. What a world it is,
Created beautiful as any gem
Of varying radiancy! Is man himself
The Satan who would mar the Creator's skill,
By peering through the shifting lens of self?
What brought us here, if not to find our Eden?
And now that man, as Satan, sets the lens
Of self the standard, battling for the false,
What is there but for Eve to plan escape?

MADAME C. But not without her Adam?

CHAMPLAIN. Ask the moon,
Good Mistress Eve; then bidding her good-night,
Let us within to plan our coming flight.

Digitized by Google

ACT III. SCENE 8.

The woods in the neighbourhood of SIEUR HEBÉRT'S *house on or near the site now occupied by the buildings of Laval University. Enter* HEBÉRT *with his musket in his hand and his axe on his shoulder, on his way to the felling of one or two trees on the outskirts of his farm.*

HEBÉRT. Toil breedeth heart's ease, and the heart's ease hope;
But when our troubles reach the boiling point,
The toil becomes perforce a trouble more.
These stalwarts, one by one, have given way,
And seems it now as if my axe's edge
Were but an instinct in me,[27] set incensed
Against all forest growth that mars
The coming of my harvests.

Chip it, snip it, bite between,
Underneath the branches;
Time each blow to cut it clean,
Where the timber blanches;
Sheer the rings with swinging mettle,
Till we see the great limbs settle.

[HEBÉRT *sustains the rhythm with his axe on a tree near by.*

Such is life,
And life a-wearies of this world at times.

Digitized by Google

Louis Hebért, what is't that makes you sad?
Champlain has gone. I've seen the ship set sail
Which bore him and his wife away to France;
And, seemed it, as I strained my eye to watch
It down the harbour, I had lost my Anne again,
With nought but gloom to feed my soul upon.
My Anne is dead, an angel glorified:
This other angel lives, but turns her back,
As if the light of heaven she sheds around
Were stolen from us, not gone out. As yet
Champlain has not come back. Why should he run
Away from what is sunshine, to the night
Of our endeavours in this *monde petit*
That festers round the Cul-de-Sac, and makes
A cesspool of our colony? All is
Much as he left it—lumber, stone and lime,
Lying a-weathered in a rubbish heap, nor fort
Nor house begun. This De Caën has played
Him false, as else he has with others, worse
To worst a-coming. Crime now grows apace,
The rage of hunger cries alarm within,
While scent of tribal onset from without
Makes terror flap its wings.

Enter GUILLAUME COUILLARD *unnoticed.*

Chip it, snip it, bite between,
Underneath the branches—

COUILLARD. So, ho, *beau-père,* you're at it, nip-and-chip,
Like young one just awake. I've come with news;
Think you, who has arrived?

Digitized by Google

HEBÉRT. Has Champlain come?

COUILLARD. Nay, not so good as that.

HEBÉRT. Ay, not so good,
Nor better, save the coming of his wife.
Who is it has arrived?

COUILLARD. The Jesuits.

HEBÉRT. Ho, ho, at last!

Chip it, snip it, bite between,
Underneath the branches;
Peel your eyesight, watching keen
Where this new edge launches;
Nip and snip, cut deep, unsettle,
Now the land will find its mettle.

[COUILLARD, *amused, times the rhythm with his hands, and* HEBÉRT *with his axe on the tree.*

COUILLARD. You take the tidings strange.

HEBÉRT. And you?

COUILLARD. Nay, nothing now disturbs me much,
From thunderbolts to treason.

HEBÉRT. But these priests?

COUILLARD. Their welcome has been wintry.[28] More than that,
Like Him whose name they bear, they have not where
To lay their heads.

Digitized by Google

HEBÉRT. Has De Caën refused
Them house-room at the *Habitation?*

COUILLARD. He has.

HEBÉRT. The miscreant! Have they left their ship?

COUILLARD. Not for another day.

HEBÉRT. There then is chance
To void betrayal of philanthropy.
The Recollets will take them in; if not,
Up on the hill with us we'll find them quarters,
Perchance not fitting, yet the best we have.
What other news from France with them for us?

COUILLARD. The nephew takes his uncle's viceroyship;
Louis Sainte-Foye has been baptized a prince;[29]
And rivalries in trade have shaken hands.

HEBÉRT. What! Ventadour, a second duke, is head,
With union of the rival companies?

COUILLARD. Yea, that is how 'tis said.

HEBÉRT. Then that is why
The Jesuits are here. This Ventadour
Was once a priest,[30] I've heard, and thus would make
Amend to Mother Church for his default.
A bishop once, a bishop ever after,
Does not prevent a priest from being duke.
But what is Champlain in this late revise?

COUILLARD. *Lieutenant du Viceroi,* as formerly,
With prestige better poised.

Digitized by Google

HEBÉRT. And De Caën?

COUILLARD. The companies are one,[81] and he, no doubt,
Has won Beauchasse's shoes, with sole beneath,
But with no soul above, and best endowed
With all his other gifts, for grinding fine
His profits from the poor. I would not wonder
Were we to hear the doggerel of his death
Entoned some night, as was Beauchasse's once.

HEBÉRT. I see you hate the man.

COUILLARD. I hate the breed;
And not the man himself, as God forbids.
He stole the ship of Pontgravé,[82] and then,
To make a fuller gain and hide his guilt,
He made demand for peltries in exchange,
Doubling his threats against the governor
All impotent to curb his cruel greed.
God save us from the trading breed who claim
That all is fair in business.

HEBÉRT. Pontgravé
You mention. What of him, the worthy man?
When may we see him at Quebec again?

COUILLARD. They say he's getting old and bent with gout,
And may remain in France, unless, in time,
The De Caëns should find his virtues out,
And deem them worth to them a money gain.

Digitized by Google

HEBÉRT. And she—the *chatelaine*—the fair Helène—
What have you heard of her? Will she return,
To bring our sunshine back? 'Tis she I think
And think of most, as still I think of Anne.
Guillaume Couillard, my son, what's said of her?

COUILLARD. Ah, Sieur Hebért, there lies our grief again.
Something has happened;[83] what, I do not know.
The fathers do not speak of her. Not dead! Oh, no,
The others say. But this I've been assured of:
We ne'er will see her here again, whate'er
May hap her husband.

HEBÉRT. Never see her here again?
What, never, never, never, never again?
Then I must to my work, and think of Anne,
If these our troubles I would keep this side
The boiling point. Good day, Guillaume Couillard;
This tree I must bring down, and then we'll go
To house the Jesuits.

Chip it, snip it, bite between,
Underneath the branches;
'Tis fate's long arm that striketh keen,
Fate's own blow that blanches;
Though our troubles do not settle,
Love will never lose its mettle.

Digitized by Google

ACT III. SCENE 9.

A room in the Fort St. Louis, which stood at the north-eastern end of what is now called the Dufferin Terrace. CHAMPLAIN *seated at a table. The starving population of Quebec heard murmuring in the adjacent chambers and courtyard, expostulating with* PONTGRAVÉ *and* COUILLARD, *who have charge of the distribution of whatever rations of pulse and roots still remain in store.*

CHAMPLAIN. They must not say we die of cowardice,
Even though the people cry for bread, or these
Our ramparts, like the face of death, betray
The lapse of function. Sieur Hebért, alas,
Is dead. And now Quebec, his hope and mine,
I fear is struck with death's last agony.

[*Dismal sounds from without.*

A VOICE. More, more, the smallest measure more!
We die
For lack of more.

SECOND VOICE. More for our children: think
Of them and all of us: we starve!

CHAMPLAIN. Are these
The groans of hopes not overcome? O God,
What hope is there, waiting, perchance, a sign
From me that all is lost to muster cry
Of death's despair!

Digitized by Google

[*The dismal sounds repeated. A dirge follows.*

God help us in our dire distress,
As these our burdens round us press.
Famine and death! Woe, woe to us!
It cannot be He'll leave us thus!

CHAMPLAIN. Oh, give me strength to bear
The stress of this! 'Twere worse were I to join it.
Guillaume Couillard and Pontgravé are there:
I overhear their tones.

[*The murmurs grow less intense, and finally die away in the distance.*

When I returned,
Two years agone, there was a glimmer in the air—
Though I had left my light of life behind—
And from that glimmer I did faithful grope
Along the path of duty. Work relieved the gloom—
Relief sustained that my Helène had 'scaped
The dismal sharing of these final throes.
This fort was built, to be rebuilt,[34] when burst
The elements to test its strength.
The *Habitation* rebuked neglect,
Demanding its renewal, as Helène
Had prophesied it would. The Recollets
And Jesuits made progress in their homes;
While yonder, near the shades of Cap Tourmente,[35]
My meadow-lands gave recompense to toil,
Thus eking out my garden growths and those
Of Sieur Hebért. The war with nature brings

Digitized by Google

The pioneer pains, and we had ours in full—
Sore pains, but no regret. The elements
Of near success peered out at times to prove,
Amid our toils, the harvests of a land
That yet may feed its millions. Yea, there was
Reward for us in hoping for the best.
But, when revenge made out its slimy trail,
To join its envyings with our natural foes—
Turning religious zeal and trading lust
A providence against us—hope grew weak,
As idleness stood by, to let the flood
Of envy overflow defeat for us:
Redress was made to slide aslant to run
Champlain ashore. The hazard stay, you say!
What! stay't, with famine harking at our heels,
Impending doom o'erhead, retreat cut off,
Despair enticing downwardness? As well
Say stay to law decreed inevitable.
Season has followed season with no ship
In sight to frustrate famine. De Caën
Knew well—and knows, no doubt, without chagrin—
That we have long been languishing for lack
Of food. De Roquemont knew it,[86] when he fled
Before the English fleet. The world knows it.
And now Quebec may haggard nurse despair,
Staring at desolation, want, and death,—
Hoping against the hope that French relief
May chance escape the ships of David Kirke.

Enter PONTGRAVÉ *and* COUILLARD.

PONTGRAVÉ. Couillard and I have seen the last of them

Digitized by Google

Off to the woods to dig for roots. The air
Will do them good, even should their gathered stock
Be bitter stomach-stay. But for Couillard,
They would have made a meal—one final gulp—
Of all we had.

CHAMPLAIN. But for that boat—[87]

PONTGRAVÉ. Ay, ay,
That boat! Ne'er speak of it, or you will make
Me mad, to think I dared dispute your wisdom.
But for that boat, which brave Boullé commands,
There would not be a speck of pulse on hand
To fleck in famine's eye.

COUILLARD. Arm as we may,
Why should we fail of refuge in the woods,
While seeking succour in the Indian camps;
Leaving the crumbs we have, to keep alive
The women and the children—speeding it,
As chance will let us, hither home again?

CHAMPLAIN. Well said, Couillard, there's action in your words,
But little else. The tribes are scant of fare
As we. The Hurons have no food to sell.
A sack or two the brave Brebeuf secured,[88]
But what was that to fill so many mouths,
Unless a miracle had intervened,
To make it multiply.

Digitized by Google

Enter an Indian with perturbation in his manner.

THE INDIAN: I have seen it! I have seen it! The ship, the ship! One, two, three, no more perhaps.

CHAMPLAIN. What have you seen,
And where and when?

THE INDIAN. The ship, the ship, out yonder, there, when I was fish for eel, near the fathers' place.

CHAMPLAIN. I wonder if it be the English fleet.
Run, Pontgravé—nay, rather you, Couillard—
Run out and see, or, better, let us all!
Ho ho, here's more of it!

Others rush in, bringing with them the two little girls, HOPE *and* CHARITY, *who run in affright to* CHAMPLAIN *and are taken up in his arms as if for fatherly protection.*

CHARITY. The ships, the ships,
The cruel, wicked ships,[39] drive them away!

HOPE. They cannot harm us now.

The company of root collectors, men, women and children gradually crowd into the chamber, filling the air with all manner of dismal, despairing cries. Amid the turmoil, CHAMPLAIN *sets his two charges on the table with his arm around them, and asserts himself as one fearless of the situation.*

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN. I would have silence here.

[CHAMPLAIN'S *servant approaches the table with four bags of roots, which he places near* HOPE *and* CHARITY, *as these little ones keep a standing attitude in presence of all, near the governor.*

Here is my garrison, and there, I ween,
Is provender to last our present needs.
Mark you how much of fear these tots reveal,
With this my arm around them. Me they know
Protector to be trusted. Ah, my friends,
Nor other may you fear while I am near,
To stand by you, to fight for you, to save
You from the enemy, nay, come what may,
To stay the pangs from hunger's gripe,
Whene'er war's terms we make.

Enter the Recollet and Jesuit Fathers.

Why should we fail
Of faith in what may come, while courage lasts.
See, hither come the servants of the Cross,
To give us confidence, soul unto soul,
In all that destiny has store for us.
Hie therefore, to your sundry sentry posts,
And there await the coming of the foe.
Give way to cowardice in nought you do,
Nor deem me other than I am, your friend,
And proud protector in the king's good name.
My little ones, good Pontgravé will care
For you. Couillard, remain. Come hither, friends
And reverend sirs, that counsel we may take.

Digitized by Google

ACT III. SCENE 10.

The capitulation of Quebec. A room in the Habitation, in which some effort has been made to improve the dismal aspect of things. The Recollets and the Jesuit Fathers are present, along with whatever attendants the governor has been able to muster.

CHAMPLAIN. Remonstrance has been made. The dignity
Of governance has been upheld. Respect
Has not been wanting from our enemy;
And now there but remains to press the terms
On which we must surrender. Here I hold
Their writ demand and our reply thereto.
Brave Father Joseph has but found his way
From off the English fleet, prepared, no doubt,
To tell us how his mission fared on board,
To amplify our plea for some delay.

FATHER JOSEPH. There was but one, and only one reply
To all my urgency, and that was this:
Quebec is theirs by right of *force majeure,*
And they must take it at the cannon's mouth,
If meekness fail us.

COUILLARD (*aside*). They must have schooled
With De Caën, who stole the mariner's ship.

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN. What said they of the peace[40] that's ratified
Of late, between the warring nations?

FATHER JOSEPH. Nought
They said to adorn the calendar of sense:
The place is theirs to take, and they must take it.

COUILLARD (*aside*). After the manner of the De Caëns!
When will the breed die out while might is right?

CHAMPLAIN. Messieurs, 'tis ours, in this our day of fate,
To brave two foes at once. The one we've dared
Up to the brink of death; and none can vote
Us cravens when, the other to escape,
We plead our dire distress and lack of arms,
To those who have commission over us.
England and France, if we have heard aright,
Are now at peace. These Kirkes are at our gates,
Accredited, perchance, but over-late
In this their siege. Therefore New France is none
Of theirs, though we withdraw: in time our own
Must be returned. Why should we then repine?
Our foe in arms relieves our foe of want,
And we are rid of both, with no great loss
To our complacency, none to our courage.
By these our terms,[41] request is made to give
An honourable exit unto those who leave,
Protection unto those who fain would stay,
With arms and property secured to all.

Digitized by Google

Details there are—but here comes one who has,
No doubt, our fate all in his convoy's keep.

Enter an Envoy from the Kirkes. All rise to greet him and his attendants with due formality.

ENVOY. My masters, in the admiral's name, their brother,
Return fair answer to your latest plea for peace,
As mercy wills.

CHAMPLAIN. Nay, peace for justice' sake.

Envoy. Mercy or justice, it is meet for you,
As suppliants, to sue, not to demand.
The admiral, who is at Tadousac,
Will give full warrant for his high command,
As he may will it there. Nor can you have
A ship to France your own, who wish to leave—
Only to England passage in an English ship,
To obviate surprise upon the seas.
All chattels are escheat, yet clemency
Will not withhold what's due to personal need,
No more than bounty, courteous with its aid,
Will tolerate what bears the mark of spoil.

CHAMPLAIN. The terms, perchance, are better than their tone.

Envoy. The tone is as the times. Sweet words come in
When war goes out, and I am waiting yours
To give it *congé* for example's sake.

Digitized by Google

When once the keys are given up, my task
Returns into my masters' hands, to be
By them prolonged or circumscribed,
As they deem best.

CHAMPLAIN. You hear the terms, *messieurs,*
Submission first, with clemency in trust:
Shall we give way?

[*All bow silently, and* CHAMPLAIN *takes up his pen to sign for capitulation.*

CHAMPLAIN, (*continues*). One poor last word from me
Before I sign. Immunity for all
Herein is ratified. The public weal,
Whate'er is left of it, has been released
From jeopardy. Our honour holds respect
For what it is. Our valour's unimpugned;
And so, resigned, we bow our heads to fate.
Under proud England's shield, we all return
To France—the sons of France to France. But what
Of these my *filles petites* of wigwam birth,
My heart's desire, the children of my years?
Have they release? They are not French, 'tis true;
But they are mine, my very own indeed:
And I would have them playmates still
Around my knee.

ENVOY. Should thus a patron's plea
Make hazard of a country's good?

CHAMPLAIN. Ah, that!
Then this has been remit for afterthought?

Digitized by Google

ENVOY. 'Nay it has been refused.

CHAMPLAIN. Refused? If so,
Then bid I pen good-bye. No signature
Of mine will seal this traitorous document.
But why refused?

ENVOY. 'Tis said an Indian war
Would issue be,[42] were they removed to France.

CHAMPLAIN. Who talketh thus, inimical to me
And mine, as he must be?

ENVOY. This you may know
In time, without my aid. What wots it now?
Do you refuse to sign?

CHAMPLAIN (*perturbed*). Not for Quebec's release
Would I, its governor, refuse to sign,
Nor dare refuse, in presence of our straits.
But for these innocents! For them I'd dare—
Alas! I am a bowèd man grief-struck,
Encompassed round with foes—not men, but fiends,
Who barter lies for passion's sake, devise
Fell deeds by subterfuge, and heartless mock
The virtues of their friends. These would me break?
But I will not be broken. Men are made
To do their duty, not to seek repose
Beyond the aim of lurking enemy,
Away from breaking. Broken? Never! See,
The signing of this paper breaks me not,
Though I may lose my children by the act.
I am a bowèd man, not broken yet;
For you, my friends, and for Quebec I sign;

Digitized by Google

And should I make appeal, my little ones
To save from all this wreckage of our enterprise,
Your master, Monsieur Envoy, giving heed
To my request, may earn a better name
Than conqueror. Quebec is taken! We,
Disarmed by fate, submit, God help us all!
Give to your masters message of our act;
Speak peace to them in our behalf; for since
You have in hand the record of our rout,
Sweet words may now come in as war goes out.

[*Exit the Envoy and his attendants.*

Alas! Quebec is taken—taken at last!
Messieurs, my friends, what more is there to say?
I am not well, and would be all alone.
Adieu! there may be lifting to our sorrow,
When sleep evolves relieving for the morrow.

CHAMPLAIN (*alone*). Quebec is taken! What of
that, you say?
Since, line by line, its tale hath been of woe,
Sowing surprise in every paragraph,
Which folly could or would not comprehend.
Is life a game that flits from hope to hope?
Are toils but play with heavier tools than toys?
Are men but children aching from their games?
Quebec is taken! And the doom of it
Brings aching now to me, alas! enough
To probe my reason to its inmost quick.
The fact—the overwhelming fact! Who says
The past redeems it with its pros and cons

Digitized by Google

Of praise or blame? The future may, you say!
Ah, ha, the future? Would you play the game
Once more, Champlain, to be a fool for nothing?
Methinks the Cardinal did Roquemont send
To tilt with fate, and bravely, too. But why,
When Kirke made pause a year, was aid withheld?
Was Richelieu afraid? Ha, ha, the duke,
The man of iron, was't he who was afraid?
Nay, rather, was it not, as it has ever been,
This devil's hunt for dividends enlarged,
This trading greed a-hoarding of its gold,
That shameless left us panting here for lack
Of food and arms? Alas! the wreck of it!
The shame of it! The ruins of a hope!
The present, past, and future playing game
Of hide-and-seek, jeering at my chagrin!
Despair, despair, we're in it dark enough,
The ditch you once did laugh at, my Helène;
Ay, in it deep enough and dark enough,
With foundering to our vows! Who interrupts?

Enter HOPE *and* CHARITY, *running towards him.*

Ah, ha, 'tis you, my chits. Come to my knees,
My little ones! What brings you round me now?
To give me kisses when my sun is low,
And make my twilight dawn?

Enter PONTGRAVÉ *and* COUILLARD.

So, ho, my friends,
'Twas you who sent them hither. Nay, look

Digitized by Google

Me in the face, my Pontgravé, nor seek
To say me nay. These eyes of mine behave
As if from sunshine we should borrow showers.
'Twas good of you to come, couched, as you've been,
With pain so long. And you, Guillaume Couillard!
The world is not a blank with two such friends.
Quebec is taken! Ay, but friendship holds
Its own, and ever will, I trow, as God designs.
These pets of mine they surely will not take
From me. Yet who can tell what hate will do?
Your wife, Guillaume, hath not a heart of stone,
And she may give them of its mother's warmth
Until I come to claim them. Come to claim them!
Perchance in time—Nay, nay, the day is dark,
Too dark for prophecy. Good night, good night;
Patience in darkness is our only light.

Digitized by Google

ACT III. SCENE II.

The return of CHAMPLAIN. *The courtyard of the Fort St. Louis.* CHAMPLAIN *waiting to receive the keys of the place from* SIEUR DE CAËN *who has held it in trust for the French Government from the time of its surrender by Sir David Kirke. Files of musketeers and pikemen surround the newly arrived Governor, with the crowding inhabitants of the colony near by. Salutes from the fort and counter cannonading from the ships in the harbour.*

THE PEOPLE. Joy, joy! Champlain is home again, *mont-joie!*

SONG AND CHORUS.

There is no waiting that will not be blessed,
With justice bringing faith its recompense:
The worst must ever greet in time the best,
With no reprisal in its impotence.

Up, then, with joy in hand,
Raise we our *vivats* famed in song,
Vive le roi!
Up, then, at joy's command,
Raise we our *vivats* long and strong,
Vive le gouverneur!

Enter FATHERS LE JEUNE *and* BREBEUF *in haste from the Mission House of the Jesuits, these being now the only missionaries in the place.*

Digitized by Google

LE JEUNE. Welcome thrice welcome, to your home once more,
Under the auspices of this new *régime!*

BREBEUF. I bid you welcome, too, with joy to spare
From this my own return an hour ago.

CHAMPLAIN. Surprise gives greeting a romantic tinge,
When two such veteran *pères* take part in it.
I know not if these shouts be orthodox,
Exuberant toned from river front to fort;
But now your presence ample warrant gives
That I may them accept as loyalty.
This is a day to be remembered.

THE PEOPLE. Joy, joy! Champlain is home again, *mont-joie!*

CHAMPLAIN. Peace, peace, my friends! We may not mar the hour,
Which is the king's. Patience gives etiquette
An undertone, which we had best observe,
Until the master of the fort appears
To give me up the keys. He tarries long.

Enter SIEUR DE CAEN *with some show of state.*

DE CAEN. I heard your volley when the anchor dropped,
And gave reply. This unkempt din of song
And roistering glee I deem a liberty—
An insult to the dignity of rule,
Verged, as it is, on change.

Digitized by Google

CHAMPLAIN. *Pardonne, monsieur,*
When law and order would its lesson learn
From De Caën, then may the universe
Seek mending at the hand of fallen angel.
My virtues are but few, but were it mine
To borrow from your stock, I fear I'd rue
The minuend. If aught be much amiss
'Tis in our patience overtaxed to hear
You reprimand the loyalty of these
Your whilom subjects. Therefore I would have
The emblems of your power given o'er at once,
So you may be delivered from the task
Of ruling ne'er-do-wells.

[CHAMPLAIN *receives the keys of Fort St. Louis from* DE CAËN *amid the plaudits of the colonists.*

The lot is mine
To hold these keys by right of sovereign's seal.
The country's host, I may not hinder you
From making peace with these. Hither, my friends,
With me, that we may see what there is left
Of dignity within this ruler's home.

[*Exit* CHAMPLAIN *with his immediate attendants and the Jesuit Fathers,* SIEUR DE CAËN *being left alone with the crowd.*

COUILLARD. I would a word with you, my noble Sieur,
And these would like to hear what I would say.

Digitized by Google

Nay, nay, you must not go, as once I told
Beauchasse, when they were teasing him
For his iniquities.

[COUILLARD *lays his heavy hand on* DE CAËN'S *shoulder, as he once laid it upon* BEAUCHASSE'S *when the indignant colonists were burning the effigy of the latter; and the people, with threatening looks, draw near to listen.*

DE CAËN. You would insult me?

COUILLARD. Insulting's not my trade as theft is yours:
The truth is no insult, only a scourge
At times, when cowardice undoes its trews.

DE CAËN. How dare you, sir?

COUILLARD. I dare to do and more,
Most noble Sieur, remembering, as I do,
The mariner's ship, and other heartless acts
Of yours against the poor. The good old man
Was robbed; and we are here to think of him
As one who ne'er deceived his fellow-man.
You ask me why I dare! Ah, De Caën,
The measure of your past misanthropies
Puts daring out of countenance. Your fame
Is infamy inborn, with brow and cheek of brass.
Nor need you look to these for sympathy:
They know you well.

[*The people murmur louder.*

Digitized by Google

Your name is infamy,
And now Champlain is here to save Quebec
From your rapacity.

DE CAËN. Give way, you hulk!

COUILLARD. Nay, you must stay and hear me to the end.
Beauchasse did so, even while his double burned.

[*The murmurs of the people wax louder and louder, and finally the kindling indignation, at* COUILLARD'S *suggestion, no doubt, develops into the old cry of hate and merriment: Beauchasse, toujours Beauchasse, Beauchasse à bas!*

COUILLARD. You hear, the wolves have still their howl,
Though they be famished less.

DE CAËN. Was it Champlain,
You fiend, who bade you ribald me?

COUILLARD. Champlain!
He is within, and always speaks the truth.
Indeed, the wolves may show their teeth so white
That you may have to seek him.

DE CAËN. Let me go,
I say.

A VOICE. *Caën à bas!*

COUILLARD. You hear the wolves!

Digitized by Google

[DE CAËN *draws closer to* COUILLARD.

DE CAËN. The Cardinal will hear of this in time.

THE CROWD. *Caën, toujours Caën, Caën à bas!*

COUILLARD. They will be singing of you soon, as once
They did in honour of Beauchasse; and then
You'll know what liberties they're keen to take,
As insult to your dignity of rule,
In tones of tyranny your own.

THE CROWD. *Caën, toujours Caën, Caën à bas!*

They sing.

We have him now, the devil's chicken,
À bas Caën!
Fit for devil's broth to thicken,
À bas Caën!
Now you feel of death the shiver,
Cent per cent must go for ever,
As the goods we now deliver,
Toujours Caën à bas!

COUILLARD. Ha, ha, their ire's a-storm! Keep near me now!
I did not think the touchwood was so dry.

Enter CHAMPLAIN, *the Jesuit Fathers, and the Soldiers.*

CHAMPLAIN. What's this, my friends? Your turmoil's out of date.

Digitized by Google

This man is now my guest, secure from harm
As if he were mine host. Undo these looks
Of wrath. Turn not our triumph into spite.
Sing, if you will, your songs of joy in peace.
Quebec was taken once by force of arms:
And now it has been taken once again,
Under the auspice of a new *régime,*
As Father Jeune has said. Guillaume Couillard,
I charge you, take Sieur De Caën within,
And treat him as you would your best of friends.

THE CROWD. Joy, joy! Champlain is home again, *mont-joie!*

SONG AND CHORUS.

Again we greet the hero of our choice,
Accept the blessings heaven and earth outpour:
Away with wrath! With heart's ease in our voice,
Let's fill the land with joy from shore to shore.
Up, then, with joy in hand,
Raise we our *vivats* famed in song,
Vive le roi!
Up, then, at joy's command,
Raise we our *vivats* long and strong:
Vive le gouverneur!

Digitized by Google

Notes on the Drama

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Notes on the Drama

Notes to Act I

1. *The Stadacona Woods.* Champlain's first attempts at grain-raising in his Quebec colony were confined to the fertile tract of ground running back from the edge of the rock, across what are now known as the Place d'Armes, the Anglican Cathedral Close and the cloisters of the Ursuline Convent. This tract, as he tells us, was covered by hard-wood thickets, a sure indication of its fertility. This fertility, it may further be said, extended across the plateau to what are now the grounds of the Laval University, where Hebért and Couillard made contemporary attempts at growing cereals and garden stuff. The original village of Stadacona is supposed to have lain to the south-west of this tract, near where the glacis of the Citadel now slopes upward.

2. *Jean Duval and Antoine Natel.* These are the genuine names of two of the conspirators. In fact, the plot against Champlain's life, as represented in Act I., is substantially historic, in terms of what Champlain himself has told us of the occurrence. The license of blank verse and the dignity of the old Parisian French of the period have to be taken as a justification of the phraseology put into the mouths of the two chief conspirators.

3. *"While grows this Habitation."* Some have thought to suppress the aspirate in the name given to this the first dwelling erected in Quebec, by using the form *l'Abitation.* But the most of English writers speak of it as the *Habitation,* a word of three rhythmical feet or five syllables wherever it occurs in

Digitized by Google

the versification. The site of this first Government House in Canada was near what is now the corner of Notre Dame and Sous le Fort Streets, possibly a few yards from the site occupied by the chapel of Notre Dame des Victoires. The plan of the structure is best understood by examining the quaint drawing which Champlain himself has left of it to us, with its three main double-storied and semi-detached buildings, measuring respectively eighteen feet by sixteen; its storehouse, courtyard and dovecot or watch-tower; its gallery and small esplanade; its palisade and ditch. The house was originally built at the expense of the trading company organized by Sieur de Monts. The group of buildings had its garden attached, running out towards the shore line of the Cul-de-Sac on the one side and the open river on the other. Sagard tells us that it was altogether "a fine house," though he had no very high opinion of its strength to resist even an Indian attack upon it. At first the edifice afforded accommodation for the company's labourers and mechanics. In 1616 it provided accommodation for the first settlers and their wives; and, in 1621, when sundry huts had been erected for these, it was fitted up as the home of Madame de Champlain. Even then the buildings were beginning to show signs of having been too hurriedly built, wooden structures as they were. Indeed, when Champlain brought out his young bride from France, one of the wings was in a state of collapse, while the others were far from being wind or water tight. The neglect of the representatives of the company, in providing for the repairing of the property, was of a piece with their heartlessness towards Champlain in other respects, as the preceding drama points out, with due regard to historical data. De Caën, the head of the amalgamated companies, promised to provide for the fortifying of the place, but as usual failed to keep his promise. During the occupancy of the edifice by the Kirkes, the improvements put out on it by Champlain were further supplemented; though, when Emery de Caën and De Plessis Bouchard returned to Quebec, after the colony had passed from the hands of the English, there was nothing left of the poor old *Habitation* save a heap of ashes. Some say that lightning was the cause of the fire which consumed it, while others maintain that Thomas Kirke, one of Sir

Digitized by Google

David's brothers left in its charge, intentionally destroyed it at the time of his departure.

4. *"Champlain must not return."* What the real intention Jean Duval had, when he planned the death of Champlain, can only be conjectured. What he and his fellow conspirators proposed to do with Quebec is not easy to make out. Champlain had made a name for his intrepidity which had seized the envious blacksmith as worthy of imitation in his own person. Samuel de Champlain, the principal character in the foregoing drama, was born in the little French town of Brouage, in 1570, and died in the Fort St. Louis on Christmas Day of 1635. The building in which he died stood only a few yards from the spot where his monument has been erected. His schooling included a thorough knowledge of navigation and cartography; while the place of his birth, standing, as it does, in view of the Bay of Biscay, and having been in his time a military station, gave him many opportunities of learning something of the life of the soldier and sailor as well as that of the sea-trader. For a period he was a quartermaster in the French army, and is said to have had an active share in the wars of the League. Subsequently he visited the West Indies as captain of a vessel of the Spanish fleet, which gave him a chance of seeing the colonies that had been planted in the latitudes of the so-called Spanish Main, and which probably led him to turn his thoughts towards the lands of the higher latitudes in America that might eventually, through his own efforts of exploration, come to be known as the French Main. He was thirty-five years of age, however, before a first opportunity came to him of entering upon his career as an explorer. In 1603, Sieur Amyar de Chaste, an ex-Governor of Dieppe, took it into his head to establish a colony somewhere on the American side of the Atlantic, where he might spend the remainder of his days, with his family around him as his neighbour-colonists. The king granted him the necessary patents, and several merchants of Dieppe went shares with him in his enterprise of sending out a couple of vessels to spy out the lands that had long ago been heard of from Jacques Cartier, and from which the Basque fishermen and certain fur-traders had brought home valuable cargoes. The captain of one of

Digitized by Google

these ships was a well-known and experienced merchant-mariner of the name of Sieur Francois de Pontgravé; and, shortly before the sailing of De Chaste's vessels took place, the owner of them, having heard of Champlain and his skill as a geographer and chart-maker, invited him to take part in the expedition. And, when permission was obtained from the King that this officer in the wars of the League should give up his soldiering, to take part as an explorer of the North American coast, there was no thought in the said officer's mind of refusing De Chaste's invitation. Champlain, therefore, started on his first voyage with Pontgravé, on the express understanding that he was to take rank as the king's geographer in the expedition. From that first voyage of his with Pontgravé, Champlain's career became the history of Canada. His reports of that voyage and subsequent ones along the shores of Acadia, brought him into fame at the French court and among the seaport traders, while the founding of colonies in Acadia under the auspices of De Monts was but the prelude to the founding of Quebec in 1608, with Champlain for its first governor. After that date the biography of the distinguished explorer stands as the earliest chapter in the annals of the *ancient capital*—a community which he succeeded in maturing as a place of permanent abode, under a recurrence of hindrances which might well have dismayed the stoutest heart. Indeed, the plot of the drama of the preceding pages has its main antithesis in the heartlessness of the trading companies and the magnanimity of Champlain. (See Champlain, the Explorer.)

5. "*Ugsome eels and mildewed pulse.*" Quebec thus early was a famous resort of the Indian tribes for the fishing of eels. Their starvation fare was dried eels and peas-meal, to which the pioneers of Quebec were in time reduced, when the cruel-minded De Caën left them to their own resources.

6. *The Cul-de-Sac.* This was an inlet or little harbour or bight, which originally had the *Habitation* and the Church of the Recollets on its eastern shore. The Champlain Market House now stands upon its site, with the outer areas of the water space planked over towards the line of the present

Digitized by Google

steamboat slips. Before it was turned into a market-place, two wharfages ran out into its waters with a slip between, thus providing moorage for the schooners engaged in the river traffic. At the foot of the Breakneck Steps, which formed the short-cut from upper town to the Cul-de-Sac, there are the remains of a tomb which for a time was fallaciously supposed to be the *sepulchre particuliér* in which Champlain was buried. Not far from this was the Champlain Spring, from which the *Habitation* was supplied with the purest of spring water. In later times the said Cul-de-Sac was surmounted by the Royal Battery, which stood near the foot of Sous le Fort Street, and was looked upon as the business centre of lower town before the opening up of St. Peter's Street and Dalhousie Street as thoroughfares.

7. *"Madame de Guercheville still would have her pères."* This French lady, once a maid of honour to the wife of Henry IV., was a marquise in her own right, and possessed of large means. She became interested in the conversion of the Indian tribes of Canada, and, in line with her enthusiasm, she at one time secured a grant of all the territory once allotted to De Monts and his company for evangelizing purposes. Her efforts in Acadia ended in failure, partly from the quarrel between the Jesuit Fathers she had sent out and Biencourt, the son of Baron Poutrincourt, and partly from the interferences of Sir Samuel Argall, Governor of Virginia. Both De Monts and Champlain urged her to come to the rescue of Quebec. But De Monts being a Huguenot, she would have none of the parsons of his church as evangelists; and it was not until 1625, when the Duc de Ventadour became Viceroy of New France, that she extended a generous hand to the Jesuits' Mission, with sympathy in her heart neither for Recollect friars nor Huguenot parsons.

8. *"Supplies afresh from Tadousac."* Tadousac, situated at the mouth of the Saguenay, seems to have been a *rendezvous* for the French fur-traders from the days of Jacques Cartier. It possessed a splendid back-country for the procuring of the fur-bearing animals of the forest. The first company's house erected in the locality was built by Sieurs Chauvin and Pont-

Digitized by Google

gravé, and within its store-rooms supplies were kept for distribution even after Champlain had established himself at Quebec. But for the severity of its winters and the sterility of its surroundings, Tadousac might have become a formidable rival to Quebec, as it certainly was for years as a peltry depôt.

9. *"Bark-built, though not all barques."* The birch-bark supplied the Indian tribes with wigwams for residences and canoes for river and lake explorations, as well as many other conveniences in their rude domesticity. The word barque has a technical sense, inasmuch as it denotes a sailing vessel of three masts, the foremast and the mainmast being square rigged and the mizzenmast schooner rigged.

10. *"The Montagnais no doubt."* The Montagnais, a branch of the Algonquins, occupied the region round the Saguenay and along the north side of the St. Lawrence. It was through their influence that Champlain made the mistake of his career as governor, namely, the invasion of the territory of the Iroquois. He was later involved in trouble by their faithlessness in failing to meet him on his way up the Ottawa for exploration purposes; in their cruel murder of two French sportsmen on the Beauport Flats; and their subsequent threatened massacre of the whole population of Quebec as a means of escaping punishment.

11. *"Pierre Chavin knows what I would."* Pierre Chavin is an historic name. He is on record as having been placed in charge of Quebec during Champlain's absence. In 1610, he is said to have been relieved by the governor on his return, and to have received the highest commendation for his tactful success in bringing the colony through its first two winters. He was succeeded by Sieur du Parc in the year mentioned, when he returned to his home in Rouen.

12. *"A guide for Captain Blais."* Blais' name is unhistoric.

13. *"Messages from Pontgravé."* The character of Pontgravé was akin to Champlain's own for humaneness. The former

Digitized by Google

was originally a merchant of Rouen, who associated himself intimately in trade with Chauvin, the peltry merchant, and afterwards with De Chaste. His full name was Francois du Pont, Sieur de Gravé, but history knows him best as Pontgravé, the kind-hearted mariner, the faithful friend of Champlain. He had to do with the carrying of the first of the colonists to Acadia, and afterwards joined Champlain in his plans for the colonizing of Quebec. There should be a monument erected to his memory at Tadousac, of which port he was really the pioneer navigator. While staunchly standing by his duty in withstanding the Basque fur-poachers, it was there he was wounded and had a number of his crew killed; and it was there he came face to face with the De Caëns, who demanded the surrender of his vessel on a mere technicality of their charter. The only time Pontgravé seriously differed from Champlain was when the latter asked him to assume charge of *Le Coquin*. The friendship between these prominent pioneers, however, was as unselfish as unaffected. After the surrender of Quebec to the Kirkes, Pontgravé returned to his home in Rouen. As late as 1645, ten years after Champlain's death, he was in Quebec with five ships under his charge, and bearing with him the memorial of the agreement between the colonists and the trading company then holding the peltry monopoly. According to the terms of that treaty the colonists secured a profit of two hundred thousand francs from this one expedition for the collecting of furs, while the company itself secured only half that amount for its share of profit. In a word, Pontgravé was not only a skilful navigator but an honest trader as well as a safe friend.

14. "*To every Basque and Malouin ghoul afloat.*" The Basques still form a large community under the shadow of the Pyrenees and near the apex of the Bay of Biscay. From their seaports they were drawn across the Atlantic, even before Cartier's time, on account of the wealth in the fisheries of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and its exits to the ocean. Their territory has always been partly in France, but mostly in Spain. They have a language of their own. Malouin is the name given to a citizen of St. Malo, from which many fishermen and traders sailed every year to Canada after Cartier's visit.

Digitized by Google

15. *"While yet Quebec is in its infancy."* There were not more than twenty-eight of the company brought out by Champlain in 1608 who decided to spend a winter under the shelter of Mont du Gas, as Cape Diamond was first called. One of Champlain's witticisms was to the effect that for every ounce of cold there was at Quebec there was a pound of it at Tadousac; and the severity of that first winter at Quebec would have been as bearable then to the European as it is now, had the proper precautions been taken in the matter of food and clothing. As late as October Champlain made his first sowings of wheat and rye, November bringing the first fall of snow with its Indian summer after. In February a blizzard fell upon the community which lasted for two days and two nights. In April the snow had disappeared, and in May the trees had assumed their foliage, when all was well again with the little community to enjoy the summer weather. As far as the weather was concerned, Quebec in its infancy had the climate it has now, only with much to learn on the part of its people as to how to withstand it with comfort and a freedom from the scurvy and other complaints. The place had been christened Quebec, or Kebec, by the Indians—a term which in their speech meant merely the "narrows" at the lakelike confluence of the St. Lawrence and the St. Charles.

16. *"To bell the cat."* The fable of the mice and the cat culminates in the difficulty of securing the services of any one mouse brave enough to tie the bell around the cat's neck as a sounding alarm to the others to get out of its way when it goes out on the hunt for its prey. Archibald, Bell the Cat, is a soubriquet well known in Scottish history.

17. *"We have no justice court."* A permanent court of justice at Quebec was not established until 1620; at least, we are told that M. Nicholas was greffier or clerk of such a court in 1621, when the colonists held a first public meeting to prepare a memorial to the king setting forth the disabilities under which the colony was labouring. At that time Louis Hebért had been appointed Crown Counsel for the colony, or Procureur du Roi, and Gilbert Courseron, constable, or Lieutenant du Prévost.

Digitized by Google

18. *"The citadel my brave Chavin will hold,"* that is, the *Habitation,* the building of the Fort St. Louis not having been yet thought of.

19. *"Make up a gamme de trois,"* that is, a tune in which the first three notes of the scale alone are used, as in many Indian melodies.

20. *"And then De Chaste when died Chauvin."* After the ill-fated venture of De la Roche on Sable Island, certain exclusive trading rights were bestowed upon Sieur Chauvin, a merchant of Pontgravé's native town. With him were associated Sieur de Pontgravé and Sieur de Monts. These three made two voyages to Tadousac, and a third voyage had been planned when Chauvin suddenly died from heart complaint. Shortly after, Sieur de Chaste, of Dieppe, had bestowed upon him very much the same trading rights as Chauvin had held, with the additional understanding that he was to make exploration of the country. Pontgravé, as has been said, was in command of De Chaste's project, with Champlain as his second. On the return of these two navigators they learned that De Chaste had died almost as suddenly as De Chauvin; and since the former's commission became null and void on the death of its possessor, some other monopolist had to be sought out to make application for the trading supremacy on the St. Lawrence. This other monopolist was Sieur de Monts.

21. *"Darache's treacherous pistol shot."* De Monts had secured, like his predecessors, a monopoly of the fur trade. When, however, Pontgravé, in 1608, reached Tadousac, preceding Champlain by a few weeks, he found several Basque poachers around Tadousac under the leadership of one Darache. When remonstrated with, this same Darache not only defied the mariner of Rouen and his written commission from the king, but attacked the company's vessels, wounding Pontgravé, killing several of his crew, and dismantling the mariner's own ship of everything in the shape of firearms and other weapons of defence.

22. *"Dovecot built by Poutrincourt."* Port Royal, now the

Digitized by Google

town of Annapolis in Nova Scotia, was virtually founded by Baron Poutrincourt, a French gentleman who had accompanied De Monts and Champlain on their visit to the arm of the sea now known as Annapolis Basin. Being charmed with the site and surroundings of the place, Poutrincourt made an instant request to De Monts for a grant of the locality. The story belongs to Acadian history.

23. "*Racked with priest-and-parson strife.*" The strife began on the way out to Port Royal, there being in the company of intending colonists several Catholic priests and Huguenot missionaries, whose argumentations were of such a character as to excite the false suspicion that one of the former had been murdered in the woods of St. Mary's Bay.

24. "*Cul-de-Sac and Storehouse Point.*" See Note 5. Storehouse Point seems to have been in the direction where the Custom House of Quebec now stands.

25. "*Noël and all the rest.*" There were in all four Noëls mentioned in connection with the pre-Champlain period. Jacques Noël, the nephew of Jacques Cartier, was associated with Sieur de la Journaye Chaton, in 1585, in prosecuting the fur trade, but they were heartlessly deprived of their claims when the Marquis de la Roche was endowed with the somewhat empty honours which had been exempted by the death of Roberval. Etienne Noël, another of Cartier's nephews, was with the latter when he encamped at Cap Rouge, and carried home the intelligence that the cliffs of that locality were rich in diamonds and gold, which, however, turned out to be but "cape diamonds and pyrites." The former Noël had two sons in Canada for a time, named, respectively, Jean and Michael. These heirs of Cartier were, however, all set aside from realizing on their uncle's explorations through the intervention of the merchants of St. Malo, who claimed that Cartier's commission was inimical to the well-being of their seaport. If Cartier had spent more money on his voyages than he had received from the Crown, they said, the St. Malo merchants had also made investments in connection with the fur-trade of Canada which were

Digitized by Google

not to be belittled. Lescarbot is quite indignant over the treatment of Cartier's heirs, reminding the public that they were the sufferers with the Noëls, since beaver skins had advanced in price four hundred per cent. from the time when Jacques Noël had the trade in his own hand.

26. "*When merry Marc Lescarbot ruled the roast.*" Port Royal was founded in 1604, though it was not until the return of Poutrincourt, in 1606, that there came much of an interest into its early days. Along with Poutrincourt there came out from France M. Marc Lescarbot, a Parisian poet, who has left us a history of the New France of his own and Champlain's time, and whose name is specially connected with the festivities of the first French capital in Acadia, during the winter of 1606 and under the auspices of "The Order of the Good Time." Andrew Archer, in his concise way, thus writes of these festivities: "Lescarbot remained in command of the fort: to direct the ploughing and sowing of the fields around it, to till his garden, to indite a rhyme, or write a page of his History of New France. When Champlain returned in November, rather disconsolate from his cruise, the irrepressible Marc, habited like old Father Neptune, appeared at the gate of the fort, surrounded by his Tritons, and welcomed him with a poetical address. To pass the time pleasantly, fifteen of the gentlemen of the colony instituted the Order of the Good Time. Each of them held the office of grand-master for a day, whose duty it was to cater for the company. At the hour of dinner this grand-master, with the staff of office in his hand, a napkin on his shoulder, and the collar of the order around his neck, entered the hall, followed by the members of his brotherhood, each bearing a dish. There was great rivalry among them as to who should provide the best table. Their board groaned with the variety of fish and game. The best restaurant in Paris, Lescarbot boasted, could not show a better bill of fare. An Indian tribe was encamped near Port Royal. The merry and hospitable Frenchmen invited its sagamore, Membertou, and other chiefs to their table. Warriors of less note, and women and children, crouched in the corners of the hall, and were fed from the board. The winter was mild and genial, and it gave zest to *The Good Time.*" "Roast" has been substituted in the text for "roost" in the proverb.

Digitized by Google

Notes to Act II

1. *The Boullés.* Before Champlain set sail for Quebec, in 1611, he had become betrothed to Helène Boullé, the daughter of M. Nicholas Boullé, of Paris, who is said to have made investments in the colonizing enterprises undertaken by De Monts and his associates. The family, as far as can be ascertained, consisted of a son and daughter, the son having taken passage for Canada in one of the Company's vessels two years before Champlain decided to take his wife out to live with him in the *Habitation.* The family were Huguenots, and this is possibly one reason why so little is known of Champlain's domestic affairs from the early annals of Quebec. All that is known for a certainty is that the marriage contract between the governor and his wife arranged that the one should fall heir to all that the other possessed, and that Madame Champlain survived her husband nineteen years, having retired to a nunnery at Meaux of her own founding, after his death, and leaving behind her a name for sanctity still preserved in the convent's records. She was about twenty-two years of age when she arrived in Canada, remaining mistress of the *Habitation* for not more than four years. There is more known of her brother than of the other members of the family. In his eighteenth year he came out to Canada and boarded the vessel which bore Champlain and his wife to Quebec as it was passing Cap Tourmente. He had spent a winter with Pontgravé in the *Habitation.* As one of the residents of the place his name is affixed to the petition which was sent to the king from the first public meeting ever held in Canada, remonstrating with the viceroy's decree launching the company of the De Caëns. He is also mentioned as the captain of *Le Coquin,* as it set out on its perilous voyage with thirty of the famishing colonists of Quebec on board, who,

Digitized by Google

happily for them, fell into the hands of Kirke on their way out to the open sea. Madame Champlain's Christian name has had the accent placed on its last syllable for the sake of the rhythm.

2. "*Returned with Monsieur L'Ange.*" What is known of the poet L'Ange is very meagre. He indited an ode to Champlain on the issue of the latter's first volume of travel published in 1613; and afterwards followed the explorer as far as Montreal, where he was the first to announce to him on his return from the West the arrival of Maisonneuve. M. L'Ange returned to Paris after spending only a few months in Canada.

3. "*Loving ride à la volante.*" As one on wing, *volant* being the French for shuttlecock.

4. "*To climb proud Mont du Gas.*" The full name and title of De Chaste's successor was Pierre du Gas, Sieur de Monts de Saintonge, and Champlain gave the name Mont du Gas to Cape Diamond in honour of the same. When it was changed to its present name is unknown.

5. "*And yet another with the Recollets.*" The Recollets arrived in Canada in 1615, though Champlain was in communication with the superiors of the order for a whole year before he could influence them to consent to the sending of a contingent of four priests.

6. "*My friend Hebért.*" Whatever were the doubts in the mind of the Parisian druggist before he left Paris to be a farmer in New France, or the hardships he had to undergo from the climate and the opposition of the Company, he never seems to have wavered in his loyalty towards his adopted country. The site of his farm-house was where the Laval University now stands, though he was owner of other property in the vicinity, having transferred the portion of land at the mouth of the St. Charles for a monastery farm for the Recollets, in exchange for their property adjoining the *Habitation*. He died in 1627, his remains being deposited in the graveyard of the Recollets at the St. Charles, and afterwards removed to the

Digitized by Google

grounds of the Recollets now built over by the Anglican Cathedral. His family remained in Quebec during its occupation by the Kirkes, and one of its streets still goes by the name of the faithful old pioneer.

7. *"From Orleans unto Helen's Isle."* That is, from the Island of Orleans, opposite Quebec, to St. Helen's Isle, opposite Montreal. The latter was so named by Champlain in honour of his betrothed; the former received its present name in honour of Philippe de Valois, Duke of Orleans and son of Francis I., though the Indians had called it Minigo and Cartier the Isle de Bacchus.

8. *"Couillard, Duchene and I."* Of the first of the pioneers who were with Champlain, Couillard took second place with Louis Hebért, his father-in-law. Pierre Desportes was placed in charge of Champlain's meadows at Cap Tourmente. Abraham Martin had a farm of his own, twelve acres from the Company and thirty-two acres which he had from his neighbour Duchene. Pivert and Desportes, like Hebért, Couillard, Martin, and others, retained their property during the time of the Kirkes.

9. *"This Charles Bourbon."* Charles de Bourbon, Count de Soissons, was brother to Henri de Bourbon, Prince de Condé. They were both Catholics, the one succeeding the other as Viceroy of New France.

10. *"But never was a Bourbon Huguenot."* This is hardly correct, since Henry of Navarre has been looked upon as the first of the Bourbon line, and in 1569 joined the Huguenot army as an ally of Admiral Coligny. It was in 1593 Henry turned Catholic, seventeen years before his assassination by the fanatic Ravaillac.

11. *"When Medicis was queen."* There were two queens of France whose records are apt to become mixed in the memory of the casual reader, namely, Catharine de Medicis and Marie de Medicis. The former was the wife of Henry II., at whose door has been laid part of the blame for the Massacre of St.

Digitized by Google

Bartholomew in 1572 and the religious wars of the kingdom of France during her regency. The latter was the wife of Henry IV., who was, however, not crowned queen until the day before her husband's assassination in 1610. Marie de Medicis also was Regent of France for a time, conspired against and conspiring, until, escaped from her final imprisonment, she ended her days in Cologne under circumstances anything but befitting an ex-queen of France. The dates connected with these two queens-regent indicate how far they were both connected with Canadian history, the birth of the former being in 1519 and the death of the latter in 1642.

12. "*And bane the Jesuits.*" The Recollets were favoured by Champlain and the Jesuits by Madame de Guercheville and the Viceroy. There could, therefore, be no keeping of the sons of Loyala out of New France when once they had made up their mind to go. On their arrival in 1625 they received but scanty welcome from Emery de Caën, who had charge of the Company's affairs, and had to be housed with the Recollets out at the St. Charles until they had raised a monastery of their own. Their college was established in 1636, the building having been one of the most substantial in Quebec, resisting the wear and tear of time down to 1872, when it was razed by the "Improvement Commission." It was during the premiership of the Hon. Honore Mercier that the Jesuits were awarded compensation for the property that was theirs in Canada at the time of the Papal Bull which disbanded them in 1773 as an order in the Catholic Church. Their mission buildings are still standing at Sillery, while the early pages of American history bear the record of the enterprise, religious zeal and martyrdom of the members of the brotherhood who spent their lives in opening up the continent. As the historian Bancroft says of them: "The history of their labours is connected with the origin of every celebrated town in the annals of French America; not a cape was turned, not a river entered, but a Jesuit led the way." The order was re-organized under the sanction of the Papal Bull of 1814.

13. "*The veterans of St. Dominic.*" The Order of Dominicans

Digitized by Google

was confirmed by Pope Honorius in 1216. The early history of the Dominicans and the Franciscans in their rivalry as the exponents of the intellectual life of the Catholic Church was a prominent feature in European circles for many years, the former being identified with the upholding of the Inquisition as a means of subduing all heretical tendencies among the people for whom they laboured. The Dominicans were known as the "black friars," and though, like the Franciscans, they were originally a mendicant order with the vow of poverty upon them, this disability was disallowed in 1425 by Pope Martin. In America their labours were associated for the most part, at first, with the people of the Spanish settlements.

14. *"The druggist round the corner."* Sieur Louis Hebért is said to have been a druggist in Paris before he set sail for Canada; and this accounts for his intellectual standing as a pioneer citizen fit to adorn the office of Procureur du Roi in the new land. The study of pharmacy in his day, as in our own, demanded a schooling next in importance to the doctor's.

15. *"A certain vendeur de tabac."* Before the days of the "tobacconist's shop" as a specialty, the druggist had for one of his side lines the sale of snuff. The Spanish taught the French the habit of taking snuff, and held a monopoly of its manufacture up to the time when the Dutch and the Scotch divided the trade. The grinding of the dried leaves of the tobacco plant in conical mortars is a specialty, one of the last of Canadian snuff factories having been till lately in operation in the vicinity of Quebec, although the practice of taking snuff has all but disappeared in the respectable circles of society.

16. *"The faithful four of them."* One of the Recollets' first operations when they reached Quebec was to build their little church at the bend of the Cul-de-Sac, and then their monastery out at the St. Charles River—the name of which they had changed in honour of their patron, Charles des Böues. They belonged to a branch of the Franciscan order, unrelieved from their vow of perpetual poverty. The Company's charter was their only guarantee of support. This was finally withdrawn

Digitized by Google

when the Company of the Hundred Associates came into being. In 1629 they returned to France, nor went back with Champlain in 1632. Their property for a time fell into the hands of the Jesuits, although it was understood that the Recollets might appear upon the scene again. At length, at the urgency of the people of Quebec, a band of the Recollets set sail from France in 1670, only to suffer shipwreck and the loss of their lives. This catastrophe did not, however, prevent Pierre Germain Allard, Provincial of the Order, with three associates, from setting sail the same year to take up their quarters in Quebec. The monastery out at the St. Charles was improved by these, and afterwards supplemented by the building of their new chapel and monastery, right in the centre of the upper town of that day, where the Anglican Cathedral now stands. This property was burned down in 1796, and since they had given up their out-of-town monastery to Bishop St. Valier for a hospital, and had their only church in the country closed by order of the bishop—namely, in Montreal—the Canadian branch of the order was finally disbanded. The last Provincial of the order was Father Felix de Berey, in whose day the fief of the "brown friars" reverted to the British Crown, to be handed over to the Anglican Bishop as a site for his cathedral.

17. "*Beauchasse has lost his hostages.*" The Indian plot of putting the whole white population to death during the absence of Champlain had been revealed by one of the chiefs. Two Frenchmen had been killed on the Beauport Flats, and this massacre their murderers thought would be the safest method to adopt to escape punishment. When an investigation was held in the *Habitation,* it was decided that, until Champlain's return, two hostages should be given over to the custody of Beauchasse, who in turn handed them over to the Recollets, from whom they escaped back to their tribe after a month or two of instruction at the hands of the fathers.

18. "*Champlain must cast accounts.*" In the above transaction Beauchasse's first suggestion was that the friends of the murderers should make the Company a present of furs and there the matter might be allowed to end in the interests of

Digitized by Google

trade. "What Frenchman's life, think you, will be safe in this country, if you once compute its value by so many beaver skins?" asked the Recollets. "The murderers of these men must be delivered up, to receive due punishment for their crime." And their advice was adopted.

19. *"Where the Grand Place spreads."* The Grand Place must have been in part the space between the Fort St. Louis and the grounds of the Recollets' upper town monastery, occupying in part the site of the present Place d'Armes.

20. *"The coureurs-de-bois roam."* The fur-trade was responsible for the starting into being of this distinct class of woodsmen among the early French settlers. In them was to be seen the civilized adopting the methods of the savage nomad—a source of weakness to their compatriot pioneers and too often a scandal to the primitive life of the early Canadian settlers. "Let me to the city!" says the country lad in these days, "that I may learn of the wonders of life"; just as the pioneer-farmer's son too often said in early times: "Let me to the woods, where I may get as near to the freedom of nature as possible, and be my own master." Francis Parkman has, however, given us a poetically drawn picture of the *coureur-de-bois,* which we would not like to part with, even if the subject of it too frequently forgot that he had been born a Frenchman in his neglect of the industrial, and in his refusal to protect any one but himself.

21. *"With him, my namesake."* Etienne Brulé was one of the *coureurs-de-bois* who have come by name under the notice of the historian. As a poor French lad he had been taken away into captivity by the Hurons; and when he was brought back to Champlain he was attired in the garb of his captors and able to speak their language fluently. Champlain thereafter made use of him in his explorations. At the time of the siege of 1629 he was captured by Kirke and is said to have played the traitor to his benefactor Champlain. Shortly afterwards he was killed by a Montagnais Indian.

Digitized by Google

22. *"The master would be married."* The marriage of Champlain had long been talked about, he having been betrothed to Helène Boullé when she was only a child of twelve or fourteen. In locating the possible characteristics of Madame Champlain it should be kept in view that she was a woman of twenty-two years of age when she arrived in Canada and a matured matron of only twenty-six when she returned to France.

23. *"Had much ado to caulk."* The neglect into which the *Habitation* was allowed to fall by the De Caëns has been illustrated in many ways, but in none more than in the difficulties Pontgravé and Etienne Boullé had to keep themselves from perishing within its walls during the winter of 1620, since, as Emery de Caën declared, the mechanics, who ought to have been at work on it during the previous autumn months, had been withdrawn to build the Recollets' monastery and the farm steadings of Couillard and Hebért.

24. *"I must hie for help."* We can find no mention made of any medical man being connected with the colony at this time. Sieur Hebért must have known more about the art of healing than any other person in the place, unless exception is to be made of the Recollets, whose preparation for the missionary life may have included some knowledge of surgery and *materia medica.*

Digitized by Google

Notes to Act III

1. *"Into my trinket looking-glass."* It was a fashion at this period among the ladies of Paris to have hanging at their side a small looking-glass, framed in gold or silver, and otherwise ornamented with jewels; and the fashion was one which Madame de Champlain did not lay aside when she came over from France with her husband. The trinket seems to have been a favourite object of attraction to the mothers and children of her new surroundings.

2. *"To lure the peltry pirates from their haunts."* These gentry were a source of annoyance to the monopolist companies. On one occasion Champlain undertook to convince the Indians around Quebec that these poachers were no friends of theirs. "Their only object," he told them, "is to wheedle you out of your furs," and the Indians agreed with him for the moment, claiming that the Basque traders and their counterparts from St. Malo were nothing but women and only wanted to make war upon the beavers of the country and not upon their enemies the Iroquois, as Champlain was willing to do. But words were soon forgotten by these savages, and the means were not at Champlain's disposal to punish the poachers, who made trade with the Indians all the same. Lescarbot, in his history, takes up the question in these words: "I am not retained to defend the cause of the chartered companies," he says; "but this I do know, that to-day, with trade virtually free, beaver skins sell at twice the price to the Indians which they formerly did, for the greed of the merchants is so uncontrollable that, in bidding against one another, they spoil their own game. Eight years ago a beaver skin could be had for a couple of loaves or a

Digitized by Google

knife, but to-day an Indian demands fifteen or twenty. And in this year of grace, 1610, there are traders who have given all their goods gratuitously to the savages, simply to hurt the trade of the chartered Company. Such is the envy and avarice of men." Yet the merchants of St. Malo had their side of the argument. The right of discovery surely ought to have something to do, they argued, with the granting of trading privileges, and who had a better claim to trade in the St. Lawrence than the fellow-citizens of Jacques Cartier, who had been the first to winter at Quebec and to make known its resources?

3. *"The Viceroy balking at the expense."* Champlain had been promised again and again the means of defense and for the maintaining of law and order in the colony, even directly, on one occasion, in a letter from the king himself; but these promises were never kept. On one occasion, when a consignment of arms and ammunition had been sent to him at Quebec by the penurious Company, the complacent Champlain broke out in these indignant words: "I could not imagine it possible his Majesty should have sent us such a sorry lot of weapons for our defense, especially after doing himself the honour of promising by letter an ample supply."

4. *"Save for the king's endorsement on the seal."* Champlain had of his own inception organized the community, and when a meeting was held to formulate a remonstrance to the king against the recognition of two rival trading companies in the colony, the document was signed by the Recollets, Denis Jamay and Joseph le Caron; Louis Hebért, Procureur du Roi; Gilbert Courseron, Lieutenant du Prévost; M. Nicolas, Clerk of the Court and the Assembly; and Baptiste Guers, Commissioné du Viceroy. These titles were all used, no doubt, without the endorsation of the French Government.

5. *"Poor Courseron, the constable."* Whatever were the duties attached to the above high-sounding offices, the Lieutenant du Prévost could hardly have been other than that of constable.

6. *"Another company has been formed."* This new company

Digitized by Google

had for its executive in Canada the two De Caëns. Champlain had had trouble with the old company over his function as governor, and agent of that company; and when the Duke of Montmorency gave a charter to a second company, his functions in the colony were further than ever from being defined. As an umpire between the rivals, he was all but helpless.

7. *"What think you of a friendship."* Beauchasse is the mouthpiece of a principle, non-historic as far as his personality is concerned. Jean Caumont dit le Mons was the interim clerk of the store of the old company at this time.

8. *"In my company's name."* The name of the old company represented by the approaching Pontgravé.

9. *"And Abraham Martin of the fields beyond."* See Note 8, Act. II. The "plains beyond" refer to the Plains of Abraham, on which the battle of 1759 was fought.

10. *"Who is this De Caën?"* Champlain must have known something of De Caën from the letters which Guers had brought him. Guillaume de Caën, the uncle, was a Huguenot merchant of Dieppe, and his nephew, Emery de Caën, had been a Huguenot naval captain of Rouen before he set out to supervise his uncle's affairs in Canada. Of the company they formed, there were two members Parisians, one a merchant from St. Malo, and one or two others. The company was really in the hands of the two De Caëns.

11. *"And give you nothing for't."* That was the actual demand of the De Caëns, namely, that the *Habitation* and the stock of peltries the old company had in store there, should be delivered up to them without return of any kind.

12. *"With me he's final arbiter."* The trading companies had to receive warrant from the king, and Champlain was within his rights to refuse the demands of De Caën.

Digitized by Google

13. *"Toujours Beauchasse."* As has been said in Note 9, the name of Beauchasse, at this stage of the play, stands for a principle—the principle of trading greed and selfish action.

14. *"When promises of arms are all he sends."* The inventory, prepared at the date of the surrender of Quebec to the Kirkes, proves how poorly Champlain was provided with the means for upholding his authority. He was provided with some arms, but these were so far out of date that it was all but an insult to provide him with such.

15. *"As did these henchermen of ours."* The servitors and workmen of the Recollets had no doubt taken part in the turmoil over the Beauchasse affair.

16. *"The sun's filleules."* *Filleule* is the French for god-child.

17. *"As claimed these supercargoes."* These were three clerks of the old company who had brought the latest news from France concerning the protest which that company had entered against the interference with its monopoly rights, and who were allowed to proceed to the annual *rendezvous* at Three Rivers to sell their merchandise, in face of the perturbation over the trade rivalry between the old company and the De Caëns. They assured Champlain that there was no need for any inimical attitude towards either company while the matter was still under discussion by the Imperial Council.

18. *"He will be here with Father George."* Father George and M. Guers had been commissioned by Champlain to give Pontgravé welcome as soon as he had landed, and to conduct him to the *Habitation.*

19. *"Ay, armed to truculence."* The De Caëns had come out with two or three large vessels. Pontgravé had command of the *Salamande,* a vessel of 150 tons, having on board sixty-five men. Champlain could only muster a crew of thirty all told, while some of these were at Tadousac. The balance of naval force was therefore in the hands of the De Caëns, unless Champlain

Digitized by Google

took sides with Pontgravé, and even then there was little chance of resisting the new company with success.

20. *"Your Company's rights are forfeit to the king."* The plea entered by the De Caëns was to the effect that the old company had betrayed their trust in failing to carry out the terms of their contract in the matter of bringing out new settlers to the colony. If the Admiralty of France had really refused clearance papers to Pontgravé, as it was claimed it had, then was Champlain's view of the case a sound one, and Pontgravé could only plead his ignorance of the law by way of defence. The latter assured Champlain, moreover, that, if the decision of the Council went against the old company, he was willing to give up his vessel to the De Caëns. With that view before him, Champlain was further justified in pleading for delay until the Council had been heard from.

21. *"To flirt with secrecies."* De Caën was thus far from being candid as was his nephew afterwards traitorous towards the governor in nearly all his dealings with him. A noted example of such conduct was to be seen in the return which the latter made to Champlain's courtesy in leaving the trader in charge of the governorship during his own absence in France. The reply the nephew made to him on his return was as disingenuous as the uncle's in the above instance. See Note 34.

22. *"Twice has he turned the edge of our complacency."* Champlain's conduct towards the De Caëns was throughout one of gentlemanly circumspection. To De Caën's first invitation, he sent Captain Dumay to inform him how matters stood. On the second invitation, Champlain still refused to go to Tadousac, though he was assured that the king had given both companies permission to trade during the year on equal terms, the distinct understanding being that no vessel was to sail to New France without the proper clearance papers. Pontgravé, in ignorance or defiance of the last proviso, had failed to secure the necessary clearance papers; and there the matter rested for the moment. At this juncture Champlain sent Father George to Tadousac to remonstrate with the De Caëns; and when Father George

Digitized by Google

returned to say that the De Caéns had made up their minds to seize Pontgravé's vessel, Champlain borrowed a boat from the latter, having none of his own, and went to meet the uncle and nephew, as is represented in Scene 6, Act III.

23. *"And I will take command of it."* This offer of Champlain is historic. The De Caëns had three vessels of their own, manned by crews of 150 men, any one of which was competent for the service to which the Huguenot traders said they were going to put the *Salamande,* namely, the hunting down of the peltry poachers.

24. *"With Huguenot and Jesuit inflamed."* There was strife on board ship and on shore between the Huguenots and the Catholics of the colony; at one time arising from envy on the part of the latter that the Huguenots should be privileged to worship after their own fashion in the cabin while the Catholics had to be content with the fore-castle. A like envy was to be seen on shore, when the De Caën company turned their backs upon the Jesuits on their first arrival at Quebec, and were otherwise found discriminating in favour of the settlers of their own faith. Indeed, so violent was the friction at times that the Duke of Montmorency is said to have been glad to surrender the viceroyalty to his nephew, in order to get rid of the worry of having to deal with the too frequent contradictory reports sent home over the denominational unrest.

25. *"At the gate ajar."* The Roman Catholic missionaries found the Indians ready converts to their religion, whereas the Huguenot forms of worship failed to attract them. The martyrdom of the Jesuit missionaries arose from antipathies other than religious, Champlain's impulse of taking sides against the Iroquois having given rise to a spreading racial resentment against the white man.

26. *"Memorials we send."* Champlain's frequent trips to France had much to do with these memorials. One of the most pressing of them has been referred to elsewhere. The document was drawn up at the first public meeting ever held in Quebec,

Digitized by Google

and has for its preamble the following: "The Sieur de Champlain and all the principal inhabitants of Canada, desirous of finding some relief from the confusion which distracts the colony, hereby depute the Rev. Father George to make to his Majesty their humble remonstrances, trusting to his well-known prudence to do in their behalf whatever he may consider to be most conducive to the welfare and advancement of the colony."

27. "*Were but an instinct in me.*" It has often been a surprise that so many of the farm-steadings in America are destitute of shade trees. The succeeding generations are not so loath to have trees about their residences as were the early settlers. Could it have been an acquired instinct of antipathy, such as Hebért refers to in himself, that lay at the origin of this habit of hewing down wherever there was anything to be hewn down in the shape of a tree?

28. "*Their welcome has been wintry.*" See Note 24. The Jesuits arrived at Quebec in the spring of 1625. Fifteen years before this they had found their way to Acadia at the expense of Madame de Guercheville. The Recollets had been told that the Jesuits, when they did get to Quebec, would hardly rest until the Recollet Order had been driven from the country. Yet the Recollets were the first to extend a hand of welcome to the sons of Loyala and to provide them with shelter out at their own monastery, until a first Jesuit House had been erected for the accommodation of the newcomers. Although these had come out with De Caën himself, no preparation was made by the Huguenot monopolist to provide them with interim quarters, nor was there any movement on the part of the people to give them a proper welcome.

29. "*Louis Sainte-Foye has been baptized a prince.*" This was a romance of New France played out in the circles of high life in France, probably to enhance the renown of the king's realm beyond the seas. The hero of the romance was an Indian boy, who had been brought up for a time by the Recollets, but who finally fell into the hands of the Jesuits, to be taken home by them to France on exhibition. The lad was passed off by them as a Huron prince to the purple born, until at last the

Digitized by Google

eyes of the whole kingdom was attracted towards the dusky youth, when he came to be baptized with great ceremony in Rouen Cathedral, having for his god-parents the Duke of Longueville and Madame de Villars, and for a name Louis de Sainte-Foye.

30. *"This Ventadour was once a priest."* The statement is historic, the holy order of priesthood having been bestowed upon him when his course as a student under the Jesuits had been completed. He is represented as being a much more pious man than his uncle, Montmorency, whom he succeeded, but a much less able administrator.

31. *"The companies are one."* The news was carried to Champlain by Sautein, a representative of the De Caëns, in the summer of 1622. As head of the consolidated company, De Caën, the uncle, paid a visit to Canada in 1625, and on his return it was suggested that he take over the liabilities of the Ventadour Company on the understanding that he would pay twenty thousand livres per annum to the shareholders. An accusation having been made against him for encouraging the propagation of the Huguenot faith, which he was able to rebut, the government thought it would be as well for him to appoint a good Catholic as chief commander over his fleet. This being done, the De Caëns virtually became the trading company of New France, opposed in policy and sympathy, as they were, to Champlain.

32. *"He stole the ship of Pontgravé."* This statement has a poetic license about it. The facts are that De Caën seized the *Salamande* while Champlain had withdrawn from his truculency on an exploring expedition up the Saguenay. On Champlain's return De Caën gave up the ship, claiming that it was useless for his purpose; and then, at the point of the sword, demanded a payment of seventeen hundred beaver skins on a trumped-up claim against the old company.

33. *"Something has happened."* It is not easy even to surmise why there has been so little said about Madame de Champlain's residence in Canada by the religious historiographers of

Digitized by Google

her time. She was of Huguenot descent, and it is impossible to say why she proposed to retire to a convent after her return from Canada in 1624. There is a mystery about the matter which the reader will have to solve as best he may in the light which Dr. James Douglas has thrown on the subject. "Champlain," says that painstaking author, in his details, "left a will by which he bequeathed to the church he had founded in Quebec all his personal effects in Canada. But when he married Helène Boullé, there was a marriage contract by which husband and wife mutually bequeathed, each to the other, whatever they might die possessed of. His wife consented to the will, but his cousin objected to it, on the ground that it contradicted the marriage contract. The will was set aside. His widow survived him nineteen years in the retreat of her own nunnery. Previous to his death the laws of the Church denied her the gratification of taking the veil, unless her husband would also renounce his marriage vows and adopt a religious life. This the old sailor and busy man of the world declined to do, looking upon his work as more valuable to his country and more pleasing to God than would have been the donning of a clerical or monastic habit."

34. *"This fort was built to be rebuilt."* Emery de Caën had neglected the instructions of Champlain concerning the erection of the Fort St Louis; and, even when Champlain had turned his attention to the building of it, a heavy wind one night robbed it of its roof, and one Sunday afternoon its towers fell down from their foundations upward. The priests and people were inclined to look upon the collapse as a judgment, while Champlain, saying little, proceeded to re-build his house one story in height instead of two.

35. *"Near the shades of Cap Tourmente."* The parish of St. Joachim is still noted for its fertility. It is still the seat of the "Priests' Farm." This was the first place to suffer surprise at the hands of the Kirkes, a full season before any demand was made for the surrender of Quebec. The farm buildings were burned and forty head of cattle wantonly killed, the purpose being, no doubt, to cut off Champlain from his farm lands

Digitized by Google

and a supply of fresh meat. None of the farm hands were killed or wounded, the purpose evidently only being to let famine run its course to the weakening of the fortified hamlet thirty miles away.

36. *"De Roquemont knew it."* But for the encounter between De Roquemont and Kirke's ships, relief might have reached Quebec. On the French vessels there were ample supplies, and a number of new settlers with their wives and children, together with two Récollets and two Jesuits. These ships formed a first contingent sent out to Canada under the auspices of the Company of the Hundred Associates lately organized by Cardinal Richelieu. De Roquemont knew of the straits of Champlain; and yet, being attacked by Kirke, found himself helpless to reach Quebec. Kirke's fleet was lying at Tadousac when De Roquemont appeared upon the scene. The latter had heard of the English from some Indians at Gaspé, and sent out a boat with ten of his men under Captain Thierry Desdames to reconnoitre the position of the enemy. Desdames barely escaped to reach Quebec, and the tidings which he carried to Champlain were dismal enough. From the roaring of the cannon he had been made aware of an engagement between the English and the French vessels which had lasted the greater part of a day; and, since De Roquemont had not turned up, it was all but conclusive that he had been defeated by Kirke. This was what had really taken place; and, De Roquemont's ships all having been burned or taken captive by the English fleet, Kirke decided to leave the capture of Quebec as a future venture. What with Desdames' report, and a letter which he brought from Father Lalemant, the Jesuit, to Champlain, the colony at Quebec had to piece out the story of De Roquemont's defeat as best it could, with no further news coming to it for a whole season. And soon word was brought from the farmlands of Cap Tourmente that no provisions could be looked for from that region—the buildings there having been demolished and the cattle having been burned or removed—to help tide over another winter. It was not until after Quebec had fallen into the hands of the English that the De Caëns made an effort to relieve the starving population up at Cape Diamond. The relief vessel sent out

Digitized by Google

by them was captured by the Kirkes, the news being exchanged that Quebec had been captured shortly after peace had been restored between England and France.

37. *"But for that boat."* In order to reduce the number of mouths demanding food in his famished community, Champlain conceived the idea of sending a boat-load of the villagers on a voyage down the river, in the hope that some vessel might be encountered to take them to France. There were two difficulties in his way. There was no boat in the place, and outside of Pontgravé, all crippled with the gout, there was no sailor competent to take such a craft down as far as Tadousac, far less out into the gulf or across the ocean. The De Caëns' head officer, De Ralde, had cruelly neglected to send back the last schooner of the season with or without provisions from Tadousac before winter came. To overcome the lack of a vessel, it was decided that *Le Coquin* should be built, or re-built, with the prospect of Pontgravé being well enough to take command when once it was ready to be launched in the spring. The building of the boat was an object of the greatest interest to the famishing Quebecers, Couillard busying himself in getting it water-tight by means of his improvised oakum and pine resin. When the harbour was free of ice, Pontgravé was induced to give his consent to take command of this, the first vessel ever built in Quebec—the forerunner of the thousands built on the St. Lawrence since its day. Just before sailing, however, there arose a question of etiquette connected with the mariner's commission as representative of the De Caëns and the governor's commission as representative of the king. The difference of opinion ended in Pontgravé being offended, for the first time in his life, with his friend; and the sailing of *Le Coquin* had to take place under the command of Eustache Boullé, Champlain's brother-in-law. As has been said elsewhere, the vessel, fortunately for its occupants, was captured by one of Kirke's ships out in the gulf.

38. *"A sack or two the brave Brebeuf secured."* Many were the suggestions made whereby provisions might be secured from the Indians, even to the plan of sending out one tribe near at

Digitized by Google

hand to raid some village in the distance, or to barter with some tribe inimical to the Iroquois the French prestige in arms for grain. Three Indians brought in some venison one day, but the supply was far from equal to the demand. The Abenakis' price for maize, of which they seemed to have an overplus was extortionate, as were also the charges of the Indian eel fishermen. The Huron hunters on their way down the river to attend the annual fair were intercepted by Father Brebeuf and a band of Quebecers, with the goods in hand for food stuffs instead of for peltries; but these travellers had with them only provisions to last them on the trip.

39. *"The cruel, wicked ships."* The children were not expected to understand what the coming of these ships meant, carrying with them to Champlain only the alarm in their manner they had borrowed from the alarm of the others.

40. *"What said they of the peace?"* It is doubtful whether they knew for a certainty that peace had been proclaimed. See Note 36.

41. *"By these our terms."* The terms were by no means harsh except in the case of the Indian children, Hope and Charity. The settlers were allowed to remain in the country if they chose to refuse passage to England. All private property, in beaver skins or in other form, was to be immune from confiscation; while provisions were to be distributed free to the poor, famishing colonists. No complaint can be raised against the Kirkes on the score of their humanity.

42. *"An Indian war would issue be."* This surmise was uttered by the traitorous Nicholas Marsolet, who had been Champlain's interpreter, and was one of the captured company on board *Le Coquin*.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Samuel de Champlain

The Explorer

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Samuel de Champlain, the Explorer

THE dates 1908 and 1909 mark the tercentenary of events which the peoples of the North American continent are never likely to overlook as memorable in the history of the New World, however such occurrences may be recognized elsewhere as minor, complementary issues to the greater events of European history. The former date has been taken advantage of by Canadians to celebrate the earliest beginnings of their country, while the latter has been selected by the people of the United States as a fitting time to recall in their rejoicings the exploration of the Lake Champlain region by the founder of Quebec. The one may, indeed, be taken as a memorable time-mark in the career of Champlain as a colonizer; the other of Champlain's acumen and assiduity as an explorer.

Nor is it out of place, as far as the interest of the reader is concerned, for one to follow the record of Champlain's explorations in a narrative by itself, apart from his career as a colonizing agent and first governor of Canada. The introduction and biographical note attached to the preceding drama gives a condensed account of Champlain's career as a governor; and, in what follows, the attempt is made to edit the details of his explorations, which have come down to us from the pen of the explorer himself and others, with due respect

Digitized by Google

to the unities of narration, as well as for the convenience of the reader who would learn, in a story by itself, of Champlain's romantic intrepidity in exploring the streams and lakes and watersheds of the great valley of the St. Lawrence.

Champlain, when once his soldiering days were over, entered upon his apprenticeship as an explorer in a voyage, extending over thirty months, to the West Indies, and in a vessel of the Spanish marine under command of Don Francisco Colombo. The record he himself has left of his sojournings on the islands of the Spanish Main, and within the towns and villages of Central America, indicates how well he could keep his gifts of observation in constant exercise, illustrated, as his manuscripts were, with all manner of non-artistic drawings of what he had seen and heard tell of during the voyage. In one of these manuscripts he tells us how he visited Vera Cruz and Mexico and Panama, and ventures a prophetic note in his suggestion that a canal should be built across the isthmus as a water-link between the Atlantic and Pacific. And no one can miss being interested in his record of experiences during the voyage, undertaken at the suggestion, it is said, of his uncle, who would have the French king informed directly of the marvels of the trans-Atlantic possessions of his neighbour, the king of Spain, as an incentive, possibly, to the former to seek out trans-Atlantic possessions of his own. The story which Champlain had to tell on his return to Paris made a deep impression on the gossips of the Louvre; and when old Aymar de Chaste, governor of Dieppe, and the personal friend of the king, went to court to secure a charter for the colonization of New France—

Digitized by Google

being imbued with the notion that he had a call from heaven to dedicate the rest of his days to the service of God and his king, he was not slow to find in Champlain the man to help him out with his plans of making as much of Canada for France as the Spaniards had made of the West Indies for Spain. The habit of the explorer, engendered in Champlain by his trip to the Indies, was naturally enough inflamed by the enthusiasm of De Chaste, who was prepared to meet all the expenses of a voyage up the St. Lawrence in search of a site for a first colony, as it was further assured by the proffered services of a certain François Pontgravé, who had already been in Canada under the auspices of Chauvin and certain other traders. Every incentive was at hand to give such a habit within him further development; and in 1603 two little vessels set sail from Harfleur, to follow the course Jacques Cartier had taken when he prepared the way for Roberval's first attempt at colonizing Cap Rouge.

On this voyage Pontgravé was in command as navigator, Champlain as historiographer. Their mission did not preclude them from doing some trading with the Indians to meet the expenses of the voyage; and, when they reached Tadousac, Pontgravé, who was known to the Indians of the place, made arrangements with them to have a cargo of furs ready when he and Champlain returned from the upper reaches of the river. As soon as the explorers had cast anchor in presence of the rock of Quebec, Champlain set out to hunt up traces of Jacques Cartier's stay in Canada; but all he was able to find were the ruins of a chimney out near the mud banks of the little Lairet, where Cartier had wintered.

Digitized by Google

There was no trace, on the site of what is now called the upper town of Quebec, of the Iroquois village of Stadacona, there being only a few straggling Algonquin wigwams around the site. Even the name Stadacona had been supplanted by that of Quebec, or the "narrows," which may be taken as conclusive evidence that the Algonquins had worsted their enemy, the Iroquois, in war, or, to be unmolested, had made a retreat from their settlements further up the river to a place of greater safety. Nor were there traces, anything more definite, of the Roberval colony at Cap Rouge to be taken note of by Champlain, who inaccurately tells us that Roberval and Cartier built for themselves a house on the Island of Orleans, where they lived together until Roberval was recalled to France by his Majesty for other service, very much as if he had not known of the ill-fated colony of Charlesbourg Royal.

When the expedition reached Mount Royal, there again Champlain found no trace of the Hochelaga of Cartier's time, being inclined to think for the moment that no such place had ever existed. Here again there had been a complete change of residents, the Algonquins evidently having been left for the time being in peaceful possession of the territory around by the Iroquois and their allies to the south. Hiring some of these resident Algonquins, Champlain made an attempt to pass the rapids above Montreal; but, failing to overcome the force of the Lachine Rapids, he had to content himself with hearsay accounts of the country beyond, with the ambition of the explorer inflamed, perhaps, all the more from his course being interrupted. On returning to Tadousac, Pontgravé found his cargo of furs awaiting

Digitized by Google

him, though on reaching Harfleur the two of them heard with sadness of the sudden death of their patron, Sieur De Chaste.

Champlain's second voyage to North America was made in connection with the De Monts' project for the colonization of Acadia. His survey of the shores of the Bay of Fundy and the coast of Maine is historically linked with the attempts at settlement on the island at the mouth of the St. Croix and at Port Royal on the Annapolis Basin; and the story of these attempts need not be narrated in this record of the explorer, any more than the story of the founding of Quebec. From the rude drawings of Champlain we learn the details of the *Habitation de St. Croix* and the *Habitation de Port Royale,* as we learn of the *Habitation de Quebec.* He was the person on whom De Monts and Poutrincourt depended to discover for them the more eligible spots for settlement in the vicinity of the Bay of Fundy. Even while the buildings of the St. Croix settlement were being erected, the spirit of the explorer was flushed with the expectation of locating new territory to the south, and, before his companions were called upon to contend with their first winter in America, he had made an excursion in his pinnace along the Maine coast towards Mount Desert and the mouth of the Penobscot River. This was but the prelude to his longer voyage in a bark of fifteen tons as far south as Cape Cod, an event which cannot but add interest to the New England tercentennial celebrations of 1909. The places visited included the lands around the mouths of the Penobscot, the Kennebec, the Saco, and Portsmouth Harbour, with few of the larger indentations left unsur-

Digitized by Google

veyed by the industrious Champlain, who seemed to care for nothing better than to get ashore to investigate the flora and fauna, and to make these strange, rough drawings of his of the unusual specimens that came in his way. The Indians who had their villages near the shore drew their living from the cultivation of the soil; and were, for the most part, peaceable in their reception of the company of explorers. Yet De Monts, who had personally accompanied Champlain, saw no place more attractive for colonization, as he thought, than the dismal St. Croix; and, having made up his mind to venture on no second winter's experience in any place that gave promise of no improvement, he returned to Passamaquoddy Bay. Giving orders to remove his colony to Port Royal, he there left Pontgravé, Champlain and others to test another winter, while he himself faced the members of his company in France, who were growling against the expense of an enterprise that gave no promise of immediate returns.

Champlain's third voyage of discovery was made from Port Royal in company with Poutrincourt, who had come out from France to take charge of affairs in Acadia, with Lescarbot, the poet, as his second in command. This expedition followed the course of the previous one, but resulted in no rearrangement for the location of a French settlement further to the south than the Bay of Fundy. The explorers again reached Cape Cod, and landed in the vicinity of Hyamis, on the coast of Massachusetts. At Chatham Harbour some of their associates met with inhospitable treatment at the hands of the natives, which culminated in the death of two of the Frenchmen. Then the weather became unpro-

Digitized by Google

pitious; and, with nothing but further hardship, if not danger, before them, they sped northward to Port Royal, where Lescarbot awaited them with a hospitality that lifted from them the cloud of disappointment and made them feel at home. The story of their return, as told by "the merry Marc Lescarbot," is a bit of Canadian literature which no Canadian should miss reading. "I will not compare their perils with those of Ulysses," he says, in his delicious ironical way, "nor yet of Æneas, lest thereby I should sully our holy enterprise with things impure."

Champlain's journeymanship as an explorer was thoroughly tested by his experience in Acadian waters. He was now fully prepared for his labours as such on the waterways of the St. Lawrence. In the spring following his last visit to Cape Cod, while everything began to wear a propitious look for the permanence of Port Royal as a French settlement, tidings came that De Monts had been bereft of his charter. Lescarbot was the first to leave. Champlain and Poutrincourt lingered during the early summer months to watch the results of their agricultural operations. In August these, however, also left in an open boat to join Lescarbot at Canso, from which port the three of them sailed for France, arriving in the roadstead of St. Malo in October, 1607.

Next year a new arrangement was brought about, whereby Poutrincourt was to give his attention to Port Royal, while De Monts turned his solely to the exploitation of the St. Lawrence as a place of settlement, and to the development of the fur trade as a profit-bearing monopoly. The scheme of opening up the St. Lawrence country was of Champlain's planning, and its issue is to

Digitized by Google

be found on record elsewhere in this volume. There were two ships fitted out for this new enterprise, Pontgravé having charge of the one for trading purposes, and Champlain the other in the interests of colonization and exploration. It was thought that the profits from the fur trade would more than meet the expense connected with the latter.

A first winter's experience at Quebec, which left but eight men alive out of a company of twenty-eight, did not impair the spirit of the explorer in Champlain the colonizer. In the spring following, as soon as he learned of Pontgravé's arrival at Tadousac, he hastened to meet him, with the proposal that the mariner should look after affairs at Quebec for a month or so, and thus set him free to explore the inland waters of the St. Lawrence. He had learned of the enmity between the tribes around Quebec and the Iroquois or Five Confederate Nations, whose territory was to be reached by way of the Richelieu and the lake to the south which it drained. Indeed, he has been accused of having acted unwisely in identifying himself with that tribal enmity; though how he could have carried on his explorations of the country beyond Quebec without enlisting the friendship of the Indian tribes at peace with one another by making their cause his own, it is not easy to make out. Possibly he might at first have turned his attention to the exploring of the Ottawa and the region of the great lakes, the Algonquin and Huron tribes of these regions being at peace with one another when he located himself at Quebec. But there would have been no *quid pro quo* for these latter tribes in such an undertaking, but rather the introduction of a second rivalry, which might even-

Digitized by Google

tually take part with their enemies to the south, to their own undoing. The arrival of the white man in the country was, in the eyes of the northern tribes, a means to an end, and that end was the undoing of their enemies whose excursions were as those of a thief in the night—sudden and remorseless. Otherwise the white man could be no other than the enemy of the red man. And all the suggestions that have been advanced to identify Champlain's action in taking to the war trail with the tribes nearest Quebec against those more remote, as a mistake attended by the ruinous results of pitting Indian tribe against Indian tribe and finally fomenting a racial quarrel between the colonists of New France and the colonists of New England,—all the arguments *pro* and *con* have in them nothing substantial save the necessity of the situation which pressed upon the explorer who would leave his little colony in friendly alliance with its next-door neighbours while he was on his way into the interior to find out all there was to learn about the country. His impulse was no other than one for the safe-keeping of his colony and the promotion of his plans of exploration.

Before a start was made there was the usual pow-wowing around Quebec, with the three tribes of the Hurons, Algonquins, and the Montagnais taking part in the festivities. When all was ready, Champlain took with him thirteen of his countrymen, who were each provided with firearms; while, following in the wake of his sail-boat, went the birch-bark canoes of his Indian allies. In accordance with the advice of the chief of the party, the first objective point of the flotilla was the mouth of the Rivière des Iroquois, as Champlain called

Digitized by Google

it, but which has since borne the several names of the St. John, the St. Louis, the Chambly, the Sorel, and the Richelieu. And when the explorer reached the flat area on which the town of Sorel now stands he had his first serious experience with the childish waywardness of his guides, three-fourths of whom, without warning, betook themselves to their canoes and passed up the St. Lawrence towards their homes on the Ottawa and the great lakes.

Nothing daunted, Champlain proceeded up the Richelieu with the remnant of his allies, his sail-boat outrunning their canoes where the channel was deep and broad. No word had been said by the Indians of the interrupting rapids, and, when the first cascade prevented the pinnace from going further, Champlain with seven of his men took to the woods to make a portage for themselves, but were only forced to return with a charge on their lips against their dusky allies in this second act of their duplicity. Still even then Champlain was not driven from his purpose of exploring the lake stretches which were said to be beyond the rapids; and, having ordered all the Frenchmen back to Quebec, saving two who remained with him to take passage with the Indians in their canoes, he set out along the banks of the river. All told, there were twenty-four canoes to shoulder across the portage; and, when the number of the warriors was counted as they took to the calm waters above the rapids near where the town of St. Johns now stands, Champlain found himself in command of only sixty Indians and two of his own countrymen. To those who have made this trip in more modern times, the account given by the explorer of the marvels of the route is full

Digitized by Google

of interest. The story of progress is there written as an interlinear tale to what the country must have looked like when the intrepid European first cast his eyes on its embankments of forest lands, marshy meadows, and benighted islands. Hamlets, villages, and towns are now strung on the banks of the majestic stream as on a necklace, each with its respective name that savours now of geographical and historic interest to every Canadian. When Champlain saw it, it lay as a great uninhabited region, with traces of game in evidence, and not without the suspicion of a lurking, advancing foe in its glades, as he proceeded on his way to meet his enemies on the warpath. St. Ours, St. Denis, St. Hilaire, Belœil, Chambly, St. John's, Iberville, and Lacolle, and the Canadian towns east and west of them cannot well overlook the event of the very first opening up of this region by Samuel de Champlain, no more than can the towns and villages bordering on the lake which bears his name, and including such important, populous centres as Plattsburg and Elizabethtown, in the State of New York, and St. Albans and Burlington, in the State of Vermont. Indeed, Champlain's explorations along the coast line of the New England States, and his early examination of what was long the inland water route between the St. Lawrence and the Hudson, makes it fitting that his intrepidity should be held in commemoration by the peoples on both sides of the line. Francis Parkman, the historian, has given a description of the explorer's itinerary to the headwaters of the lake which cannot be surpassed as a literary feat. His details are fascinating to the tourist making a like itinerary; and, when he tells us, in his own way, and not in Champlain's,

Digitized by Google

we marvel how a man in his study could see so vividly what another had seen in actual fact, from the preparing of the bivouac for the night to the incantations of that important humbug in an Indian camp, the medicine-man. He brings us right on to the spot when he tells us how "great islands appeared, leagues in extent: Isle à la Motte, Long Island, Grande Isle. Channels where ships might float and broad reaches of expanding water stretched between them. . . . Cumberland Head was passed, and from the opening of the great channel between Grande Isle and the main, Champlain could look forth on the wilderness sea. Edged with woods, the tranquil flood spread southward beyond the sight. Far on the left, the forest ridges of the Green Mountains were heaved against the sun, patches of snow still glistening on their tops; and on the right rose the Adirondacks, haunts in these later years of amateur sportsmen from counting-rooms or college halls, nay, of adventurous beauty, with sketch-book and pencil. Then the Iroquois made them their hunting-ground; and beyond, in the valleys of the Mohawk, the Onondaga, and the Genesee, stretched the long line of their five cantons and palisaded towns."

Champlain has left us a drawing of the meeting-place of the antagonistic tribes within the narrows between the greater lake and the lesser, with the edge of the lake shore in the foreground, and the rival canoes tied together as if they were two bunches of cucumbers. The explorer himself is represented as standing somewhat perilously between the two companies of savages, amid interwhizzing showers of arrows from the contestants. These contestants are represented as being

Digitized by Google

arrayed in the robes of the Garden of Eden, while one set of them seem to have escaped from a circular barricade that resembles a reindeer enclosure on an Icelandic farm, with the toy trees of a child's Noah's Ark for a background. It is all very funny. But it helps us in memorizing the story of the encounter all the same.

Anybody who has passed over the Delaware and Hudson Railway in daytime knows where the little station of Crown Point overlooks the narrows, immediately north of Ticonderoga or Carillon. The most of us are acquainted with the spot as historic ground when the French and English were contending to possess the important inland waterway. It was somewhere on these few miles of narrows that Champlain had to suspend his function as explorer to take up the rôle of warrior. Late in the evening, before the bivouac beds of the savages had been made down, a flotilla of Iroquois canoes was detected by Champlain and his allies moving slowly up the channel. As soon as an interchange of warwhoops made a surety of inimical recognition, the Iroquois made for the shore to await daylight behind a hurriedly raised barricade, which, as has been said, Champlain so quaintly illustrates as a kind of sheep-pen or reindeer enclosure. The tribesmen from the St. Lawrence kept to their canoes, after having moored them to a common pole. The din at a modern lacrosse match, with a like exchange of compliments, filled the air during the greater part of the night, when once it was agreed that there should be no fighting till next day. Nor was it till dawn that the three Frenchmen put on their armour. Champlain's art has proved impotent to give us a notion of what the armour of the Indians was,

Digitized by Google

though there is every reason to suppose that the Iroquois had both bucklers and breastplates with them, as the Hurons had shields and leggings made of twigs interwoven with cords. The Iroquois demanded a champion from the ranks of the Hurons; and Champlain, in his European paraphernalia of steel breastplate, helmet and greaves, with sword by his side, ammunition box slung over his shoulder, and arquebuse in hand, stepped several paces in front of his allies. Then he levelled his arquebuse and sent its four balls whizzing all unseen among the Iroquois warriors, who resolutely replied with a shower of arrows, even after they saw two of their chiefs brought to the ground. But when additional gunshots came from the woods where the two other Frenchmen were ensconced, the deadly marvel of the arquebuse sent them flying in all directions. When all was over, Champlain's allies raised their yells in honour of the white men; and, when night came on, they proceeded to refresh their savage spirits by torturing one of their prisoners, retaining the others for their delectation on their way back and at home. In a few days they all arrived at the mouth of the Richelieu, where the Hurons departed for the Ottawa, on the understanding that the white men would visit them in their settlements, and take part with them in a general incursion towards the Iroquois country south of the great lakes.

On Champlain's return to Quebec, and thence to France, to make, among other things, a present to the king of the head and arms of the Iroquois chief, which had been bestowed upon him as a memento of his renown by his Algonquin friends, it could not but recur to him that what had been at first a mere impulse of self-pro-

Digitized by Google

tection and convenience was likely to lead to serious complications among the aboriginal tribes of the country he had made up his mind to colonize. He could not but have noticed the superiority of the Iroquois warriors in that first encounter with them on the narrows between Lake Champlain and Lake George. The Plymouth Fathers had heard of their prowess around the head-waters of the Hudson and in the territory of what is now known as the State of New York. If the European colonizer to the south should be seized with the impulse of self-protection which had seized the European colonizer of the north, there was but one issue from such an impulse, and history now tells us what that bloody issue was. And yet all we have now to blame—if the mere locating of blame be our purpose—is the evolution itself, with its alliances and wars and its breeding of racial antipathies as ethical activities making for progress. Champlain's very natural impulse to protect himself and his colony can only be taken by us as the starting-point of the evolution which had to come—and in the way such an evolution generally does come—if North America was ever to be prepared as a fit abode for a civilized population. The pity is that, now the evolution has run its course, there should be the faintest suspicion that any of the old racial antipathies still linger, or that any one should be allowed in pulpit or parliament to foster the same among the unthinking.

The evolution was soon in evidence, with a gnashing of teeth on the part of the Iroquois against the tribal allies of Champlain. There had been some pow-wowing between times, the Montagnais of the Tadousac region promising the explorer to conduct him northwards, by

Digitized by Google

river bed and lake expansion, to the great sea, salt as the ocean, that was said to lie beyond the watershed of the St. Lawrence, and the Hurons promising to act as guides to him to the great fresh-water lakes where they had their abode. The great pow-wow of the three main tribes, or sub-tribes, in Canada—the Hurons, the Algonquins, and the Montagnais—was to be held on what is now the site of Sorel, at the mouth of the Richelieu. Opposite this site is the archipelago at the head of Lake St. Peter, including the islands of St. Ignace, Bear Island, and Isle du Pas; and while the allies were yet selecting a safe retreat for feasting and dancing on one of these islands, the report was spread that their allies were already in deadly conflict with the Iroquois, who had descended the Richelieu to seek reprisal for what had happened at the narrows the year before. Champlain and four other Frenchmen, with arquebuse in hand, hastened to the scene of conflict, and repeated the victory gained at Crown Point, of bow-and-arrow against gunpowder. The Iroquois were driven back to their canoes, with all pursuit neglected by the allies as they sat down to enjoy their orgies of feasting and torture of their captives. Champlain and his white attendants sickened at the sight of the cruelties indulged in, which ended in actual cannibalism; and yet, all the same, Champlain entered into a treaty with the wretches to visit them in their forest villages and to join them in their wars. In fact, by this time the spirit of the explorer began to look upon the Iroquois as enemies of his own, making him feel that he was but doing his duty while helping to bring about their extermination. The evolution had taken possession of him as a means to its end.

Digitized by Google

Champlain's exploration of the Ottawa bears the date of 1613. He had been back and forward to France in the interests of his colony nearly every year since his first winter in 1608. In 1613 he published his second volume of travels, and in its title we read of the function he had made his own as an explorer. It reads as follows (translated into English): "The Voyages of Sieur de Champlain, Captain Ordinary in the Service of the Marine for the King, edited in two divisions; or a reliable journal of observations referring to discoveries in New France, including a description of the lands, coast-lines, rivers, bays, and harbours, together with their dimensions, and sundry annotations of the explorer, as well as an account of the peoples, their superstitions, manner of living and making war." After these three centuries the book is as interesting as it ever was, even to the ordinary reader, dealing, as it does, with information so easily verifiable by the traveller of to-day who has a taste for topographical identification. And the year in which it was published saw the author on his way up the Ottawa to gather more information for his volume of 1619.

It has often been said that Champlain, in common with many of his friends and readers in France, had been seized with the idea that the mystery of the St. Lawrence would only be fully solved by the discovery of some waterway in the interior of the continent that formed a water-link between the Atlantic and the Pacific. The Algonquin hunters of the Ottawa had heard of large bodies of water beyond the sources of that river, while every Indian around Quebec in Champlain's time had heard of the great lakes adjacent to the homes of

Digitized by Google

their kindred, the Hurons. When, therefore, Champlain took part in the attack upon the Iroquois at the mouth of the Richelieu, he was eager, for more reasons than one, to follow up his Huron friends to their home. But affairs at Quebec having called him away for the moment, he contented himself by sending one of his interpreters forward with his tribal friends, to pick up all there was to pick up about a possible watercourse towards the Pacific. And during his stay among the Algonquins, Nicholas de Vignan, this same interpreter, found sufficient material out of which to spin a marvellous yarn, to be retailed among the gossips of the Louvre when he returned to France in 1613. Even Champlain, when he heard the romancer's story, was carried away with it, though he was cautious enough to have Vignan swear to the truth of it, in presence of two Rochellois notaries, before he apprised the Commander de Sillery and Marshal de Brissac of his intention to explore the region in question. Vignan's story was founded on a professed personal experience. There was a water-link between the two oceans. He had seen it with his own eyes: nay, had stood upon its shore, with the wreck of a European vessel in sight not far from where he stood. He had followed the Indians far up the Ottawa, had traced the source of that river to a lake, into which flowed another stream whose course had guided him to an open sea. There was no doubt to be entertained about the discovery, if swearing to it would remove all doubt.

When Vignan had run the gauntlet of his inquisitors in France, Champlain returned with him to Canada. The dream of the latter's life was about to come true,

Digitized by Google

as he thought, and he lost no time in entering upon his third exploration, which, while it failed in making good Vignan's tale, made known to the world the territory which now comprises the peninsular part of Ontario. Starting from Helen's Island, opposite Montreal, in two canoes laden with provisions, he took with him four of his countrymen, including Vignan, and an Indian guide, to traverse Lake St. Louis and reach the mouth of the Ottawa at the St. Anne's Rapids.

And with Champlain's volume in hand, and a personal knowledge of the route he took, the reader can follow him with the deepest of interest across the river expansion now known as the Lake of the Two Mountains, up to the Carillon Rapids, where the explorer nearly lost his life from the overturning of his canoe, and where the towns of Grenville and Hawkesbury now stand, near the upper terminus of the Grenville Canal. The river has not lost all its primeval traits of woodland lonesomeness, and at many of its turning-points it is easy to conceive how the scenery struck the early explorer. Somewhere beyond the mouth of the Du Lievre, Champlain met a flotilla of canoes, much as the steamboat of modern days meets an occasional raft; and finding the dusky canoeists friendly disposed, he exchanged with them, for one of their most expert paddlers, one of his four Frenchmen who had proved himself somewhat awkward in the propelling of a birch-bark.

It seems that Vignan expected that Champlain would venture no further than the Chaudière Falls; and there pause really had to be made when once the wall of foaming waters came in sight, if for no other purpose than to appease the presiding genius of the "boiling kettle"

Digitized by Google

with an offering of tobacco and sundry invocations, Indian fashion. Anxiously did Vignan await the order to return. But Champlain kept on. Past rapids and falls, through narrows made ominous by overhanging rocks, and lake-like expansions studded with islands, past the sites of the modern towns of Aylmer, Onslow, Arnprior, and Portage du Fort, they pushed their way, until they landed on Calumet Island and were entertained by an encampment of friendly Indians. Between the primitive-looking village of Bryson and Portage du Fort there is to be witnessed one of the wildest scenes on the Ottawa, the waters rushing down a narrow defile between the island and the mainland which keeps them turbulent for many a mile; and if the little company did traverse the portages of this region, they were certainly in need of rest on the Island of Calumet, where the poor French hermit, Cadieux, in later days found his grave. As one stages it across from Portage du Fort to the little railway station of Haley's, on the Canadian Pacific, the pathway is still pointed out where Champlain's astrolabe was found, after it had been lost a hundred years and more. If the pathway be authentic, the rapids near Bryson must have been shunned by the exploring party, as Parkman tells us they were shunned, contrary to the advice of Vignan, who seemed anxious at every step to raise some insurmountable barrier in the way. The exact route taken from Calumet Island to Allumette Island is hardly now traceable on the modern map. Parkman tells us that the party came out on Lake Coulonge, which is situated below the latter island; and that after they had enjoyed the hospitality of Chief Nibachis and his settlement, on the same island, they

Digitized by Google

were directed to the head of Lake Coulonge, to a settlement presided over by Chief Tessouat. The river expansion to which Parkman gives the name of Lake Coulonge must therefore be taken to extend all the way from the modern village of Fort Coulonge to the northern end of Allumette, while the labours of portaging must have been begun higher up the river than Portage du Fort or even Bryson.

Be this as it may, Champlain had reached the end of his journey when he arrived at Tessouat's encampment. Vignan had lived with Tessouat for a whole season, and through him the white men were well received. At a council, or solemn feast, Champlain explained the purpose of his visit. He would have assistance from his hosts, in canoes and men, in order to proceed to the big lake that lay a hundred miles or more farther up the river, and which had already been visited by his friend, Nicholas de Vignan.

Then the whole story of Vignan's duplicity came out, at the instance of Tessouat. That young man had never been as far as Lake Nipissing. He had been lying from the beginning about his discovery of a great lake at the sources of the Ottawa. He had never sailed up any river or down another that had brought him to the shores of a salt-water link between the Atlantic and the Pacific. His whole story had been a tissue of hearsays and direct falsehoods.

The Indians pleaded with Champlain to have the impostor killed; but Champlain, unheeding their advice, merely forced the miscreant to make confession.

"If you have deceived me," said Champlain to Vignan, "confess it now and the past will be forgiven.

Digitized by Google

But if you persist, you will soon be discovered, and then you shall be hanged."

And, to save his neck, the rascal confessed on his knees that he had been guilty of the grossest treachery and falsehood, his only punishment, however, being, notwithstanding the importunity of Tessouat to have him killed, his abandonment at Montreal when Champlain returned to that rendezvous, accompanied by a fleet of forty canoes bound thither to sell their furs.

Perhaps the most momentous of all of Champlain's explorations was his visit to the Hurons on the peninsular region bounded by Lakes Huron, Erie, and Ontario. On leaving Tessouat and his tribe, Champlain had promised to revisit them and possibly pursue his explorations further up the river. There was something of a *contretemps* in the preliminaries connected with his making such a visit. The church, in the person of Father le Caron, the Recollet, had entered the lists with the explorer—the mission of peace and evangelization as a counteracting force to the counsels of war, the overcoming of heathenism as a correlative to the subdual of the Iroquois. Champlain had promised the Canadian tribes to join them in a combined raid against the tribes south of the great lakes, while Father Caron had made up his mind to establish mission stations in the heart of the Huron country. The Canadian tribes assembled near Montreal, the explorer and the missionary being both present at the pow-wow. Champlain promised to join them with all the white men he could muster, while they promised in turn to mass a force of two thousand five hundred warriors for the projected invasion of the territory of the Five Nations. The evolution of coer-

Digitized by Google

cion was now the order of the day, having taken possession of the white men as well as their swarthy allies. Champlain left the assembled throng for Quebec, to take measures with Pontgravé for the raising of a French detachment of sailors and settlers; but when he returned he was treated to another taste of the red man's duplicity. The throng had disappeared when he got back to Helen's Island: the Indians had left for their settlements, taking the intrepid Recollet with them.

Nothing daunted, Champlain re-traversed his old route up the Ottawa with Etienne Brulé, the first of the so-called *coureurs-de-bois,* and another Frenchman. The two canoes he had were manned by ten Indians, and all went well with them until they had reached the settlement presided over by old Chief Tessouat. The line of the Canadian Pacific Railway runs alongside of the Ottawa from the site of Tessouat's village to the station of Mattawa, and it is sometimes possible for the passenger to identify the primeval landmarks which must have attracted Champlain as he poled and paddled and portaged within the confines of this wondrous valley. These include the slow, sullen flow of the canal-like section of the river, itself called Deep River, as if defiant of the shoulders of the Laurentian slopes on the far side of its course. From the inflow of the little stream which goes by the name of Chalk River to the rapids of the Joachims and the Caribou, right up to the Deux Rivières, nature seems to outrival itself at every point in its production of a changing picturesque; and, when Champlain reached the mouth of the Mattawan he must have felt surprised at his own intrepidity as the first white man to thread the wondrous maze of hill and dale

Digitized by Google

and woodland. Tessouat had done his best to dissuade him from visiting the Nipissings.

"It grieves us to think of the hardships you must endure," was what the old chief said. "The Nipissings have weak hearts. They are good for nothing in war, but they kill us with charms and poison us; and they will kill you, too."

At the mouth of the Mattawan they were not more than thirty miles, as the crow flies, from Lake Nipissing. A detour was, however, decided upon, up the Mattawan and thence across country close to the lakelet of Nasbaussing, the well-trodden portage bringing them to the broad expanse of water somewhere near the site of the present town of North Bay. The first Indian village they struck was inhabited by a branch of the Nipissings, whose medicine-men were so much in evidence as to give some ground for Tessouat's opinion of the whole tribe, whom the Jesuits at a later date nicknamed the Sorcerers, though their incantations did not prevent Champlain and his company from enjoying their hospitality. The second group of Indians the explorer met—three hundred of them out on one of the blueberry barrens gathering their winter supply of small fruits—he himself nicknamed "Les Cheveux Relevés," on account of the fantastic way they had of dressing their hair as a kind of crowning glory to their tattooed bodies and painted armour. Less fierce in spirit than in looks, they invited Champlain and his men to visit them in their encampments, and volunteered to show him the way to them on the far side of the Mer Douce, or Georgian Bay, down the French River and beyond the archipelago at its mouth.

Digitized by Google

Those who have passed by steamboat along the lake-line of the county of Parry Sound have seen what Champlain saw from his canoe—a ragged shore with lonesome inlets and disconcerting groups of islands, on which time has wrought but little change within three hundred years, and on which commercial progress has left only a moderate impression. The route Champlain followed from Matchedash Bay turned southward and overland to the interior of peninsular Ontario, the explorer following the track taken by Father le Caron through four Indian centres of population within the territory now included in Simcoe County. The Recollet had located himself at Carhagouha, and thither Champlain went to meet him and to take counsel with the congregating warriors to whom he had proffered assistance in the projected march against the Iroquois. He was in no way disappointed with his reception. The priest was overjoyed to greet him and to tell him all that he had been doing for his benighted parishioners. The tribesmen came in crowds from all parts; and, when once they had satiated themselves with feasting over the arrival of the white men, and had paid due respect to the daily ministrations of their priest, Indian and European taking part in the celebration of the Mass and the singing of *Te Deum*, the massing of a first contingent of warriors for the march overland from Lake Simcoe to Lake Ontario gave Champlain an opportunity of visiting many others of the Indian settlements, until he finally brought up at the largest of these, which went by the name of Cahiagué. As a central rendezvous for the warriors the place was well chosen, it being situated near the site of the modern town of Orillia and in full view of Lake Simcoe.

Digitized by Google

At length Etienne Brulé was sent out with twelve Indians to hasten a promised contingent of five hundred Eries, when the festivities could no longer be prolonged for them at Cahiagué. Across Lake Simcoe the flotilla of canoes sped, to reach the mouth of the Talbot, cross the portage to Balsam Lake, and thence to canoe and portage it to Lake Ontario by the trail of land and water terminating at the mouth of the river Trent. When they had crossed the great lake, it took them four days before they reached the nearest of the Iroquois' fortified encampments, situated, as it was, a few miles south of the eastern end of Oneida Lake.

Here the explorer came in presence of a new experience. He had never before seen a fortress built by Indians strong enough to resist a gunpowder onset. The fort was hexagonal in form, with an enclosure of four concentric rows of palisades, surmounted by a gallery from which the defenders could throw showers of arrows and stones from behind the upper timbers of the enclosing tree-trunks. A plentiful supply of water for drinking purposes and the quenching of fires ran all around in a continuous sluice which was fed from a pond on the far side of the fort. It was altogether the strongest structure Champlain had seen in his travels among the Indian tribes, and the only way he could think of overcoming its strength was by building rough timber towers from which, when they were dragged forward, the besiegers could overlook the upright ends of the enemy's palisades, and pour in upon the besieged their arrows or arquebuse balls.

But it was all a case of teaching the European art of war to a parcel of excited children *in articulo pugnae.*

Digitized by Google

The old way of attack was the best way to the bulk of Champlain's allies. Champlain's deadly weapon had bred in them a superstitious trust in its efficacy, which all their indiscretion of leaping and shouting and irregular attack could not, as they thought, bring to naught. If the white man was not invulnerable, what was he more than they were themselves in war? And so they turned a deaf ear to Champlain's demands for more orderly fighting than they were accustomed to; and became a prey to the coolness and strong surroundings of the besieged Iroquois. In four days the raid was at an end. The Huron allies had bemocked the methods of European warfare, and were forced to betake themselves to flight towards their canoes, and to discredit, by the way, the trust they had put in the white man and his arquebuse.

When the Huron warriors reached the other side of the great lake, Champlain had excellent opportunities of exploring the territory north and west of what is now the city of Kingston, during the hunting excursions of the returning warriors. On one of these excursions he lost his way in a labyrinth of woodland lakes, while in pursuit of natural history specimens; and the account he has left of his belated wanderings from lake to stream and back again proves to his readers what a close observer he was even when his mind could not but have been distracted by the misfortune of not knowing where he was. After the third day he came out upon his allies, to his own and their relief, though it was not until the fourth of December he was able once more to join his good friend, Father le Caron, at Carhagouha.

Champlain made good use of the winter months he

Digitized by Google

had to spend on and around Lake Simcoe in companionship with the Recollet. The district that borders on Nottawasaga and Matchedash Bays was then the most thickly populated part of the peninsula. The tribes included the Cheveux Relevés, the Tobacco Nation, and the Hurons proper, with the Neutral Nation in the vicinity of Niagara, and the Nipissings in the north. At the time of Champlain's visit all these were at peace with one another, and every opportunity was given him to pass from settlement to settlement, sometimes with the missionary and sometimes alone with his Indian guides, taking note of the peculiarities of each tribe and their means of subsistence. It was not a land flowing with milk and honey; but he saw in the mildness of its climate, the fertility of its soil and the natural wealth in its timber and game resources, a locality suitable for colonization by thousands where hundreds were all it possessed. The failure of the incursion against the Iroquois had for a time a dampening effect on the popularity of the paleface who did not fight with bow and arrow; but the unhappy issue of the raid did not hinder crowds from following warrior and ecclesiastic as they passed from village to village with their message of glad tidings from the old world to the new.

Vignan's falsehoods had not fully dissipated the dream of Champlain about that water-link between the oceans; and on his return home the way he had come, to elude the Iroquois canoes that frequented the St. Lawrence route, he exacted from the Nipissings a pledge that they would join him in an excursion in search of that great problematic waterway at some future day. Everywhere, as he passed on his way homeward, he invited the tribes-

Digitized by Google

men of the great inland peninsula to bring their peltries to the annual fur market at Montreal, where there would be a chance of discussing what future action should be taken by French and Indian against their common foe of the Iroquois nations. The evolution had matured a common cause between French and Indian, and that common cause was no other than the origin of a second common cause being matured between the English and the Indian. Champlain's original impulse to protect himself while on his explorations, and his colony during his absence, had awakened ethical forces that have made of a great social evolution what it is for us to-day, after staining the continent with the dissonance of tribal wrath and bloodshed.

The first chapters of this story of racial rage are given in Champlain's own writings, while the evolution takes up very many chapters of Canadian history. One of his volumes has already been referred to as having been published in 1613. This was preceded by his booklet of eighty pages, entitled: "About the Savages, or the Voyage of Samuel Champlain, of Brouages, made in New France." His last work was published in 1632, and is entitled: "Voyages in New France, or Canada, made by Sieur de Champlain, Captain of the King's Marine Service; and all the discoveries made by the same from 1603 to 1629." And when we examine this last volume we learn what Champlain was as an explorer. His explorations in Canada were completed in 1616. At that date he had seen more of Canada than any other white man, having studied the fauna and flora of the country, examined and experimented with its soils, noted the marvel of the resources of its woodlands,

Digitized by Google

lakes and rivers, making map-drawings of its lake-shore and ocean indentations, not forgetting to differentiate the tribal traits, manners and customs of the aborigines. In a word, Champlain as an explorer has to be made as much of as he has been as a colonizer and governor; and well may he be called, beyond his being the founder of a city, the father of two countries that are all but one.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

21

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

This book should be returned to the Library on or before the last date stamped below.

A fine of five cents a day is incurred by retaining it beyond the specified time.

Please return promptly.

Digitized by Google

Can 9721.1.33
Champlain, a drama in three acts;
Widener Library 005707887
3 2044 081 347 171